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ABSTRACT

A study investigated the foreign language needs of employees in Finland's Ministry of the Interior as a basis for developing a language training policy. Both individual employees and department heads were surveyed about perceived language training needs. Results suggest that foreign language proficiency is very important to the ministry's functioning, with the need for language skills increasing in the future. The most important languages were found to be Swedish, English, and German, with French, Russian, Norwegian, and Danish also mentioned as needed. The language proficiency of personnel was found to be insufficient, with the greatest amount of training needed in Swedish and English oral proficiency. The employees felt they needed a higher level of language proficiency for the performance of their work than the department heads felt was required. The findings suggest that self-assessment may give more realistic information about language training needs than official assessments. (Author/MSE)

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RESEARCH BULLETIN 67

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ASSESSING FOREIGN LANGUAGE TRAINING NEEDS OF ADULTS

A case study from Finland

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ABSTRACT

The purpose of the study was to lay the foundation for the foreign language training policy of the government administration in Finland. The study was carried out by investigating the need for languages, the language use situations, the language proficiency and the language training needs of the personnel in the Ministry of the Interior.

The theoretical background consisted of research results and theories of language and training needs, language proficiency and their assessment. No hypotheses were made on the basis of theories. The language training need components were defined in terms of Scisson's (1982) typology as competence, relevance and motivation, with competence referring to an individual's language proficiency, relevance to the utility of his language proficiency in work-related language use situations and motivation to willingness to participate in language training. The assessments were made by means of interviews and questionnaires. The language training needs of the personnel were assessed both by the personnel themselves (N=163) and by the department heads (N=5).

The results show that foreign language proficiency is very important to the functioning of the Ministry of the Interior. The need for languages will increase in the future. The most important foreign languages are Swedish, English and German. French, Russian, Norwegian and Danish were also mentioned as needed languages. The language proficiency of the personnel is, however, not sufficient. Judging on the basis of all assessments the greatest amount of training is needed in oral proficiency in Swedish and English. The employees actually felt that they needed a higher level of language proficiency than required in the performance of their work duties, as assessed by the department heads. The results of this study indicate that self-assessments give more realistic information about language training needs than official assessments. For the purpose of planning language training courses, it seems obvious that self-assessment by personnel is adequate.

The results of this study can be utilized in planning language training in other governmental offices. The methods used in this study are applicable to assessing the language training needs of other organizations and companies as well.

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Helsinki, May 1988

Kaarina Yli-Renko

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1. INTRODUCTION

1.1. Purpose of the study

This study is an attempt to assess foreign language training needs. It was made at the request of the Ministry of the Interior for the purpose of laying the foundations for the general language training policy of the government. Language training policy involves questions of, what languages are needed, what the level of the personnel language proficiency is, what level of the language proficiency is required, what language training needs exist, what the goals of language training are, and finally, what resources are needed for the necessary training.

This study is limited to the personnel language training needs of the Ministry of the Interior. Its results will be used in planning language training and establishing the goals for language training of the employees in the Ministry. However, the Ministry of Finance granted funds for the study in the hope that the methods used in this study could be easily adapted to assessing the language training needs of other government offices as well.

The Finnish government has not up to now offered regular language training for the employees. The Administrative Development Agency arranges language courses but the supply is very small compared with the demand. Admission to the courses is limited. Usually only those who already know a language very well are admitted. In general, others have to improve their language proficiency in such adult education institutes as civic institutes, folk high schools or summer schools - mostly at their own expense and on their own time.

Permanently established adult language training is in Finland still rather rare. However, it is hoped that the situation will gradually change. Companies and, more recently, government offices are becoming increasingly interested in arranging

language training for employees. Structural changes in the labor market and the society have brought about the demand for life-long education in all fields. Rapid internationalization and its requirements for the development of personnel have lead to emphasized importance on language proficiency. According to the study made by Luostarinen & Svärd (1982, 219) the improvement of the language proficiency of their personnel is one of the first and most important tasks of companies entering the international market.

In an ever increasing number of professions employees are required such good language proficiency that it would be impossible to acquire it once they have entered the labor market. Language learning requires life-long training. An adult's language proficiency is based on what he learned in comprehensive school, in senior secondary school, at vocational school or at the university.

From the standpoint of life-long learning, adult language training mainly consists of courses for perfecting or brushing up language proficiency. The syllabus of the courses will have to be much more task-centered than at earlier stages of language learning. Program planning for such courses requires good needs assessment. In this study, my aim is to develop an economical method of assessing language training needs, a method which could be adapted to the needs assessment of organizations and companies as well. The results might be helpful in selecting the content of language instruction in the official school system as well. The selection of languages in the Finnish school system will be discussed more in detail in the next chapter.

1.2. Language learning in Finland

The main factors influencing the selection of languages to be taught in the Finnish school system have been the geopolitical position of the country, its commercial and cultural ties, the need for Finns to know foreign languages, the fact that Finnish is not understood beyond the borders of the country and the fact that Finland is a bilingual country. 94 % of Finns speak

Finnish and 6 % Swedish as their mother tongue. The Finnish Constitution gives speakers of both languages equal rights. Swedish is spoken primarily in the coastal regions in the Swedish-speaking and bilingual municipalities and in industrialized regions in general. It is used primarily in administration, social services, commerce and the service industries. In the Swedish comprehensive schools and senior secondary schools, Finnish is compulsory at all stages and similarly Swedish is compulsory for Finnish-speaking people in the Finnish schools. (Ruotsalainen 1985, 16-17). The table 1 shows the languages taught - in compliance with the School Act of 1983 and the Cabinet decision of 1985 - in the Finnish 9-year comprehensive school and the 3-year senior secondary school.

Table 1. Languages taught in the Finnish comprehensive school and senior secondary school

Comprehensive school										Senior secondary school		
Lower level						Upper level						
Grade	I	II	III	IV	V	VI	VII	VIII	IX	I	II	III
Age	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18
A-language: 1st foreign language: English, Swedish, German, Russian, French	¦	----------	----------	----------	----------	----------	----------	----------	----------	----------	----------	---------- ¦
B-language: Swedish or English						¦	----------	----------	---------- ¦			
C-language: Optional German, Russian, French								¦	----------	----------	---------- ¦	
D-language: German, Russian, French									¦	----------	---------- ¦	

The students have to take two compulsory languages in the comprehensive school, starting with the first foreign language (A-language) in grade 3. Over 90 % of students take English, about 6 % Swedish, under 1 % German and even less Russian and French. Efforts are made to increase the number of students studying German, Russian or French as language A, but with little success. Those who have Swedish as the first foreign language have to take English in grade 7, and all the others Swedish, as language B. There are also optional languages (language C) in the comprehensive school. The most common optional languages are German, French and Russian. About 20 % of all students take German, 10 % French or Russian as optional languages. Latin may be an optional subject starting in grade 7. Thus, every student has the option of taking four languages

in the comprehensive school. Instruction time is, however, limited to 2-3 hours weekly in each language.

The secondary level of education is divided into two sectors. The young people can either choose senior secondary school or vocational school. In the senior secondary school, the instruction in the A-, B-, and C-languages is based on the comprehensive school syllabus (Table 1). Except for students majoring in mathematics, who only need two compulsory languages, there are three compulsory languages in the senior secondary school. Those students who have not started language C in the comprehensive school take language D.

At the end of the senior secondary school, all students take the matriculation examination. Three of four compulsory subjects in the examination are languages, two foreign languages (A and B) and the mother tongue. Many students take in addition a test in language C or D. The nationwide examinations are composed of a listening comprehension test, a reading comprehension test, the writing of an essay and a grammar test. It does not include a speaking test, although communicative language proficiency is the official goal of language teaching. The matriculation examination is the main reason why the students do not learn to speak foreign languages well at school. But they do get good basic skills in the written language. Thus, the matriculation examination acts as a hidden curriculum and determines the nature of language studies at school.

Vocational secondary education, starting after the comprehensive school, takes from two to five years, depending on the vocational lines chosen. At this stage, the students generally study 1 or 2 languages. Swedish has to be one of them. In the language instruction emphasis is put on the use of language in social situations as well as on special language needed in the vocation. The main problem in teaching language at vocational schools is the lack of student motivation. Very often languages do not belong to the primary field of interest of the students. (Lampola 1985, 12-13).

Those who have received a senior secondary school diploma may continue their studies at a university or a college or in programs of study based on the matriculation examination at vocational schools and institutes. Only about 40 % of senior secondary school students are admitted to a college or a university. The others either continue their studies at some vocational school or institute or enter the labor market.

At universities and post-secondary vocational schools or institutes two languages are compulsory, Swedish still being one of them. The others are English, German, French, Russian or Spanish. Students may take even more languages from among those offered on a voluntary basis. In post-secondary studies, language instruction emphasizes the social language, including cross-cultural information and language for professional purposes.

The wide range of languages available from the first stages of schooling up to language studies at the university level guarantees a wide variety of choice in language proficiency for Finns entering the labor market. The quantity and quality of language proficiency which an individual gains during his formal education provides good preconditions for the specialist language courses at the next stage of life-long language learning in the labor market. This final stage of language learning has up to now been rather haphazardly organized in Finland, but progress is now finally being made in this respect.

2. RESEARCH ON NEED FOR LANGUAGES AND LANGUAGE PROFICIENCY

The new language policy program, initiated in 1985, with a wide choice of languages in the comprehensive school and senior secondary school, in vocational school and institutes or universities described in the previous chapter is based on research on language needs done in Finland in the 1970s (e.g. Roininen 1971, 1972, 1973; Laitinen 1972; Kosonen & Roininen 1975).

The widest and best known of these studies is Roininen's (1973) nationwide study of the quantitative and qualitative need for foreign languages in commerce, industry and in the service professions. The directors of the companies involved evaluated the need in the year 1972 and again in 1980. According to this research, English and German were needed most after Swedish in the labor market both in 1972 and 1980. It was assumed that the need for Swedish and English would grow most up to the year 1980. However, a sceptical attitude has to be taken towards these estimates over such a long period.

In Roininen's study (1973) the qualitative, as well as the quantitative need was studied. A 4-stage scale, recommended by the National Board of General Education, was used in measuring language proficiency. According to these ratings, the highest language proficiency, the free use of oral and written

language, was needed in Swedish in all fields both in 1972 and 1980. In English, the lowest language proficiency, understanding an easy text and clearly pronounced simple speech, was needed most. The scale was, however, very superficial in order to be able to draw more exact conclusions from it for use in planning language instruction at schools. The other Finnish studies mentioned above were more limited, but gave similar results concerning the need for languages in the labor market.

The Finnish need surveys belong to the earliest in Europe after the Swedish studies by Dahllöf (1963) and Larsson (1969). In many other European countries similar general surveys were made of language needs in the labor market, e.g. in industry, commerce, public traffics, banks, insurance companies and educational institutions, including universities (e.g. Claessen et al. 1974 and 1978 in the Netherlands; Emmans et al. 1974 in Great Britain; Christ et al. 1979, Christ 1980 and Bausch et al. 1980 in Federal Republic of Germany, and Looms 1980 in Denmark). A common feature in all these studies was that the need for languages was assessed objectively, in general by the directors of the companies. The questions to be solved were, what foreign languages were used, where they were used, and by whom, etc. The results of these surveys were used in general in planning curricula for the public school systems.

International needs assessments have been made by Schröder & Luukkainen (1981) and Christophersen (1985). Christophersen studied the importance of the German language at school all over the world. Schröder & Luukkainen studied the need for languages and the motivation for studying languages on the part of university students at two universities in West Germany and Finland. The results indicated that the students in both countries showed similar features in relation to their need for languages and motivation for language studies. It was remarkable, that in this study the learner perspective, the individual language needs, as well as individual language training needs, were in the foreground.

The idea of taking individual language needs as the basis for program planning in language training is not a very recent one (e.g. Halliday et al. 1964). But it became widely known with the Council of Europe -project for language learning by adult migrants (Council of Europe 1973, van Ek 1973: The Threshold Level). The Threshold Level is based on an analysis of language needs developed by Richterich (1973). The final definition of language needs includes an analysis of acts of communication in terms of language situations and language operations. The situations are defined by persons involved, and by the categories of time and place. The language operations include the functions which the act of communication has to fulfil, the objectives of that act and the means to produce that act. The learning needs include the same categories of situations and operations. Each of these categories is further broken into long lists of elements by which the information is gathered. (Richterich 1973, 34).

Suggested methods for gathering the information are surveys, sample surveys, questionnaires, interviews, attitude scales, intelligence tests, job analyses, content analyses, statistics and the determination of objectives (Richterich & Chancerel 1980). Case studies in identifying migrant language needs in different countries in Europe illustrate Richterich's approach (Richterich ed. 1983). Richterich's model provides valuable information for the planners of language curricula for establishing goals and the contents of language teaching, for course planners for the defining of the learning units and their pedagogic strategies, and even for examiners. The system of categories and elements of the model is, however, very extensive and could be rather tiring to use.

In 1974, the National Board of General Education in Finland adapted Richterich's approach to the definition of learning needs of students by studying the individual language situations and operations of their parents. However, establishing aims and selecting contents of language teaching on the basis of the individual needs of the parents is somewhat question-

able.

The influence of the situational-notional syllabus of the Council of Europe system (Wilkins 1976) can be seen in the foreign language curriculum of the senior secondary school (1982) in Finland. The analysis of needs was, however, not carried out here in Finland, but rather the ready-made systems of the Council of Europe (The Threshold Level, Kontaktschwelle, Un Niveau-Seuil) were used as the basis for selecting language use situations and course contents. The criteria for selection were intuition of and logical analysis by experienced planner-teachers who were involved in designing curricula.

The latest research on language needs in Finland follows in general the functional approach of the Council of Europe-system. The present writer studied the aims of German language teaching at the senior secondary level by assessing German language needs in post-secondary studies and in the labor market in Finland (Yli-Renko 1982, 1985). The purpose of these studies was to find out which aims were important for students to attain and which aims could realistically be attained. The study was limited to general-type of language use situations in the export trade and tourism and the language used in those situations, including cross-cultural information. Professional language was excluded. The main conclusion of the research was that the most important aims were oral communication, including lack of hesitation in speaking German, and the reading of a text of average difficulty. However, the attainability of the aims, as rated by the teachers, was weak, especially in regard to oral communication.

The results indicate that the use of representatives of the labor market in assessing the future language needs of students is recommendable for establishing goals for foreign language teaching. Their evaluations of the importance were similar to the evaluations of senior secondary school students. 70 % of the students (N = 277) stated that they had chosen German as an optional language because of its use in the future. The evaluations of representatives of the labor market and students

differed remarkably from the evaluations of German language teachers in post-secondary studies, in vocational schools and at universities.

Berggren (1982) studied the aims of foreign language teaching in Finnish universities of technology by investigating the use of and demand for foreign languages in engineering work in Finnish industry. The purpose of his study was to find out in what kind of language use situations Finnish engineers need foreign languages, what languages are used in these situations, and which languages Finnish engineers do not know in spite of the fact that they need them in their work. The questionnaire, covering 60 language use situations, was very detailed and flexible. The responses of 1124 engineers provided precise information.

All participants in the study knew English and Swedish and needed them in their jobs. The language proficiency of one third was good or even better. More than 50 % of engineers, however, needed to improve their English and Swedish. About 90 % of the engineers knew and needed German but only 10 % knew the language well or better. About 60 % of the participants had knowledge below the satisfactory level of knowledge. About 50 % of the engineers needed French and Russian, but only 11 % had any knowledge of these languages. Other languages, such as Spanish, Japanese, Portuguese and Arabic were needed 3-30 times more than the number of people who knew them.

According to the results of Berggren's study the most important general aims of language teaching in universities of technology were

- the ability to cope with oral communication in work situations
- the ability to cope with oral communication in non-work situations
- the ability to read all kinds of texts in one's own field with ease and comprehension

The most important language use situations were

- reading journals and books in one's own field
- all kind of "small talk" (weather, hobbies, family, vacations etc.)
- discussing work matters with a foreign counterpart
- using the telephone for routine calls
- reading business letters and brochures
- reading instructions for the use of machines and devices
- talking about Finland and life in Finland
- writing telegrams and teleprinter messages
- showing guests around a factory or a company
- explaining how a device or a machine works
- using the telephone for complex work calls
- reading journals dealing with technology in general as well as in business life
- various situations connected with travelling
- various situations connected with living in hotels
- various situations connected with eating and restaurants

(Berggren 1982, 58-60)

Berggren's study concerned only engineers in Finnish industry. His methods of choosing the sample was not statistically reliable, and therefore detailed conclusions could not be drawn from the results (Berggren 1982, 56). Mehtäläinen (1987a) made a broader study of the use of, the need for, and knowledge of foreign languages among all the employees of 70 companies in Finnish industry from the messenger boys to the presidents of the companies (N = 4828). Mehtäläinen's study will be part of a nationwide language need study headed by Prof. Dr. Sauli Takala (Jyväskylä University).

Both Berggren's study and also Mehtäläinen's questionnaire were used in planning this study of the language training needs of the employees in the Ministry of the Interior.

3. ASSESSING TRAINING NEEDS IN ADULT EDUCATION

Dealing with adult education and human needs in general is beyond the scope and relevance of this study. The discussion is limited to the individual training needs of employees and the needs of the organization involved - in this case the govern-

ment administration - as a basis for program planning of supplementary foreign language training within the framework of personnel training. In the government administration supplementary training is given to keep professional skills up to date (Henkilökuntakoulutus 1970). Language supplementary training means:

1) specialized training to bring the language proficiency acquired during basic training up to the level of qualification required for a specific position
2) training to maintain language proficiency acquired during basic training and
3) refresher training to refresh skills which may have been partly forgotten (Adapted from Gretler 1972, 75-76).

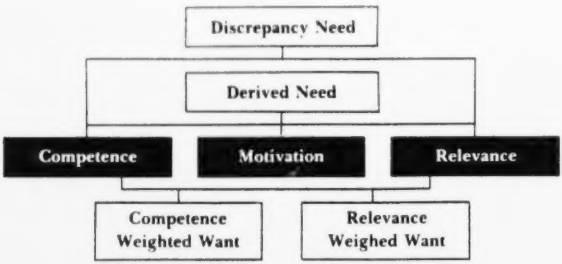
The new, and growing, emphasis on the tailoring of training programmes to employee and organization needs has lead to a new methodology based on an analysis of training needs, and the development of courses of differing duration with programmes specifically modelled on established needs. The concept of needs assessment is adapted in this study from the definition of Brackhaus (1984). The needs assessment process is composed of identification and analysis of needs followed by the establishment of general goals for language training, without, however, taking resources such as economics, time and the number of employees participating in training into consideration. That would be the task at the next stage in planning and organizing courses.

Any overview of adult education literature or research dealing with educational needs refers to the multiplicity of the concept of educational need and to the difficulty of its definition (e.g. Knowles 1970, Griffith 1978, Paukku 1978, Ekola & Vaherva 1980, Tuomisto 1981, Scissons 1982, Brackhaus 1984). In this study, educational needs are viewed from the standpoint of limited professional language training. However, the traditional narrow definition of educational need as the gap between the present level and the required level of competency (e.g. Knowles 1970, Paukku 1978) is for the purpose of language

learning too onesided.

In this study training needs are defined according to Scisson's (1982) typology, which includes three need components: competence, motivation and relevance (Figure 1).

Figure 1. A typology of educational need



(Scissons 1982, 21)

In a general sense, competence refers to an individual's ability to perform a range of skills, motivation to the predisposition of the individual to improve his ability in those skills, and relevance refers to the utility of those skills to an individual's situation. These three need components can be used individually or in some combination of two or three components to define educational need. In addition to these three need components, Scissons' typology includes two higher order categories: wants and complex needs. The category Wants involves combination of two need components, one of which is motivation: relevance-weighted want and competence-weighted want. Wants do not directly reflect educational needs, but they are important in producing viable program. The category Complex needs includes Discrepancy need and Derived need. Discrepancy need is close to the concept of educational need defined traditionally as the discrepancy between the required level of competency and the present level of competency. A derived need

includes all three need components. It relates to those areas which are important to an individual and in which the individual is motivated to improve his or her competence. (Scissons 1982, 22-23.)

In this study, the language training need is understood as a derived need and includes all three need components. Competence refers to an individual's language proficiency, relevance to the utility of the language proficiency in work-related language use situations. Motivation refers to an individual's willingness to engage in language training to improve his or her language proficiency. Motivation is an important factor in language learning. However, the discussion of motivation in detail will not be included in this study. Laine (1977, 1978, 1986a, 1986b) has made detailed studies of motivation in foreign language learning in general and in Finland in particular.

Both discrepancy need and derived need describe the qualitative training need. The qualitative training need refers to in which content-areas training is needed. The quantitative training need refers to how many persons need the training. (Paukku 1977, 25). However, the implementation of training itself in an organization - particularly in the government administration- takes time. The number of persons able to take courses may differ from what the quantitative training need was at the time of the study.

In general, the time perspective is an important and rather problematic factor in assessing training needs. The training need may refer to a predicted and/or a present training need. (Paukku 1978, 24). Referring to what was said above how much time is consumed in planning training, both the predicted and present training need will be part of the present need. In this study, the language needs are considered within a period of one year backwards from the time of assessment. The previous year is a clearly defined period of time, particularly when the study is to be made in January. The heads of the departments

also estimate language needs in the near future.

In studying training needs empirically, the most important sources of their systematic analysis are the individuals, the organizations and the society (Knowles 1970, Paukku 1978, Tuomisto 1981a, Virkkunen 1981). The definition of training needs should not be based on information from only one source, but rather on information gathered form different sources (Gestrelius 1974).

The society has to solve the macro questions of training needs. As far as language training is concerned the needs of society at large are expressed in the curricula of basic language training. In this study we are mainly interested in the training needs of individuals approached from the viewpoint of the individuals themselves and from the viewpoint of the organization. The study will be carried out task-centered.

Depending on who is making the assessment, training needs may be divided into subjective and objective training needs (Vaherva 1984, 9). There is a multiplicity of definitions of subjective and objective training needs in the educational literature. Vaherva's (1984) definition corresponds most closely to the aims of this study. According to Vaherva, a subjective training need refers to the training need experienced by the individuals themselves. Objective training needs refer to an assessment of training needs made from outside the trainees, in this case made by the organization. In this study the supervisor of the trainee estimates the language proficiency needed by the employee in the performance of his duties. The required language proficiency will be compared to the present level of the language proficiency of the employee. It must, however, be pointed out that what is concerned is not really objective needs in the most precise sense of the word, because needs are always bound up with values. Objective training needs cannot be defined unambiguously, as was earlier thought (Tuomisto 1981b, 202). In addition, it is to be noted that the present level of the language proficiency of the employees will

be based on self-assessment (cf. the next chapter).

In this study, general methods of assessing training needs are not discussed further. In the educational literature there can be found extensive lists of different methods of surveying training needs (e.g. Craig & Bittel 1967, 17-32, Knowles 1970, 100-105, Paukku 1978, 40-47). From the general methods, the interview, questionnaire and job analysis will be used in this study.

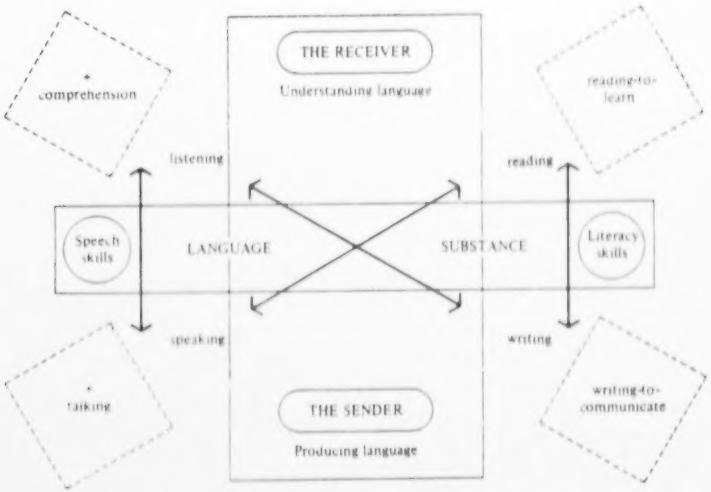
4. FOREIGN LANGUAGE PROFICIENCY AND ITS ASSESSMENT

When defining foreign language proficiency for the purpose of assessment, it is commonly divided in terms of communicative skills into listening, speaking, reading and writing (Stern 1983, 353). These communicative skills refer to language functions, notions, topic areas and settings which are limited language use situations. However, there is little consensus among scholars as to the nature of 'language proficiency' or 'communicative competence' in foreign languages (a.o. Canale & Swain 1979, Schooling 1981, Hellgren 1982, Stern 1983).

In this study, 'language proficiency' is used synonymously with 'communicative proficiency', which according to Hellgren (1982, 37) means oral and written fluency in various lingvistic contexts. That is, language use. The fluent use of foreign language in context is a proficiency that has to be gained through learning. The concept of 'competence' refers to an inborn faculty or an ability that has been acquired rather unconsciously. (Hellgren 1982, 37). The term 'competence' should therefore be avoided in connection with foreign language learning. The term 'foreign language' refers in this study to all acquired or learnt languages except the mother tongue of a person (= first language, native language). The term 'second language' is not adequate to this study since in Finland it is common to study more than one 'second language'. This has been discussed in an earlier chapter.

The concept of 'language proficiency' for the purpose of assessment is illustrated in the figure 2.

Figure 2. Language proficiency



(Adapted from Dubin & Olshtain 1977, 176)

The model shows the use of four language skills as tools of communication: listening and speaking in oral communication and reading and writing in written communication. The sender of a message uses the spoken or written language in order to communicate ideas, and the receiver of the message utilizes listening or reading skills in order to interpret the message.

From the model we can interpret different levels of language proficiency. Language proficiency expands from the elementary level shown in the center of the model by the utilization of a limited amount of language substance (sounds, meaning and rules of arrangement) and the basic language skills to the enlarged skills at the edges of the model. Talking, comprehension, reading to learn and writing to communicate sum up the skills

which go along with using the language for communicative purposes. The arrows show ways to combine the skills for assessment.

In this study, comprehension and talking are linked together as they are in a realistic setting of meaningful communication. Reading and writing skills will be assessed separately. It can be assumed that one's proficiency of reading materials in one's special field is different from the proficiency of writing, e.g. telegrams and teleprint messages.

Different levels of language proficiency are commonly described on rating scales developed for specified purposes. The various levels of proficiency form a hierarchical system. The mastery of a higher level implies the mastery of lower levels. Proficiency ranges from minimal to native-like. Although native-like proficiency is very seldom reached by foreign language learners it is the highest level in most rating scales. Native-like proficiency can be characterized as:

"1. the intuitive mastery of the forms of the language

2. the intuitive mastery of the linguistic, cognitive, affective and sociocultural meanings, expressed by the language forms,

3. the capacity to use the language with maximum attention to communication and minimum attention to form, and

4. the creativity of language use," (Stern 1983, 346).

Of the many rating scales developed, particularly in the USA, the best known levels system is the Foreign Service Institute Rating Scales of Absolute Language Proficiency (1963). It distinguishes five classes of speaking and reading proficiency: 1. elementary proficiency; 2. limited working proficiency; 3. minimum professional proficiency; 4. full professional proficiency; and 5. native or bilingual proficiency (Jakobovits 1971, 240-241). At each level the expected proficiency of a functional nature is described in detail with precise specifications. The definition of each level is applicable to all

languages. This rating system is based on the needs of career officers in the foreign service and armed forces and personnel in other government agencies like the Peace Corps. The assessment is carried out by two examiners by interviewing the candidates. (Rivers 1981). In Europe, a similar system is developed by experts of the Council of Europe, to which reference has been made in earlier chapters.

The various rating systems developed for specific needs of language learners are useful models for testing language proficiency in other situations although they cannot be transferred in detail. In this study, both the above mentioned systems have been used in developing the rating scales for the assessment of the language proficiency of the employees at the Ministry of the Interior in Finland.

Besides serving to indicate standards expected for given purposes or as descriptions of levels reached by foreign language learners, rating scales can also be used by learners and other language users for self-assessment of their own proficiency. Although various adult language institutions commonly use self-assessment as "guidance tests" for organizing special courses and dividing students into different study groups, very little research has been done on the use of self-assessment.

Oskarsson (1978a) made in Sweden a study in adult education institutions for the Council of Europe about the ability of adults to assess themselves. He compared objective, formalized assessment with subjective, impressionistic self-assessment in evaluation of language proficiency. The purpose of his study was to find out to what degree the average adult learner is capable of making accurate judgments of his own proficiency in a foreign language and if there is any correspondence between teachers' judgement of their learners' proficiency and the learners' own judgement based on self-assessment. Oskarsson made several experiments using various self-assessment rating scales in rather small groups of 10-20 students. The subjects

were asked to assess their proficiency compared to a specific performance scale in their native language. The experiment groups consisted of Swedish students studying English, French and German, and mixed groups of immigrants studying Swedish. As controls, teacher ratings, formal test results etc. were used.

The results of Oskarsson's experiments showed that the correspondence between learners' self-estimates and outside criteria, such as end-of-course grades, formal test results and teachers' estimates proved to be quite good in several experiments. On the basis of the fact that the degree of correspondence differed considerably between groups, Oskarsson pointed out that not only self-estimates but also expert ratings were less than completely reliable. The other observation he made was that the students' own scores were quite often somewhat lower than the scores given by teachers. Oskarsson assumed that part of this discrepancy could probably be attributed to errors in teacher judgements. According to Oskarsson both approaches have their merits: self-assessment for being learner-centered and formal tests being more reliable at least in the technical sense of the word. (Oskarsson 1980).

In this study, self-assessment is the only possible way of making a needs analysis for planning specific language courses for the first time for the employees of the Ministry of the Interior. There is no material concerning language use situations within the organization available to make objective tests of. Tests concerning general language proficiency are not relevant to the problem of language training needs and to determining the aims of specific language courses organized by an employer. Objective general language proficiency tests might be necessary later when dividing the employees into final study groups. If the descriptions of the needed language proficiency in various working situations are, however, exact enough, self-assessment might be enough. At the end of the course the objective test and self-assessment would complement each other. The self-assessed needs analysis of the language use situations and language functions can also be used as the basis for defining

the content, structures and vocabulary of the learning materials.

5. PROBLEMS AND STRUCTURE OF THE STUDY

The assessment of foreign language training needs as the basis for planning language courses is the main concern of this study. An attempt is made to develop a methodology to assess economically and at the same time effectively the personnel language training needs of an organization. The study is carried among the personnel of the Ministry of the Interior in Finland. The purpose is to lay the foundations for the general language training policy of the government.

The problems of the study can be summarized as follows.

The main problem:
What are the foreign language training needs of employees
- **according to their own assessment** (subjective language training needs)
- **according to the Ministry** (objective language training needs).

The Ministry's view is represented by the department heads who are responsible for personnel training. The objective language training needs are considered to be the difference between the present level and the level of language proficiency required for the effective performance of duties. An important question connected with the main problem is:

Do the employees and the organization have different conceptions of language training needs?

There are two study groups involved. The main group consists of the administrative personnel. The other consists of office personnel who were included in the study afterwards at the request of a department head who wished to cover the language

training needs of the whole personnel. That is why the language training needs of the office personnel are based only on self-assessments and also why two different questionnaires had to be compiled.

The sub-problems of the study are as follows:

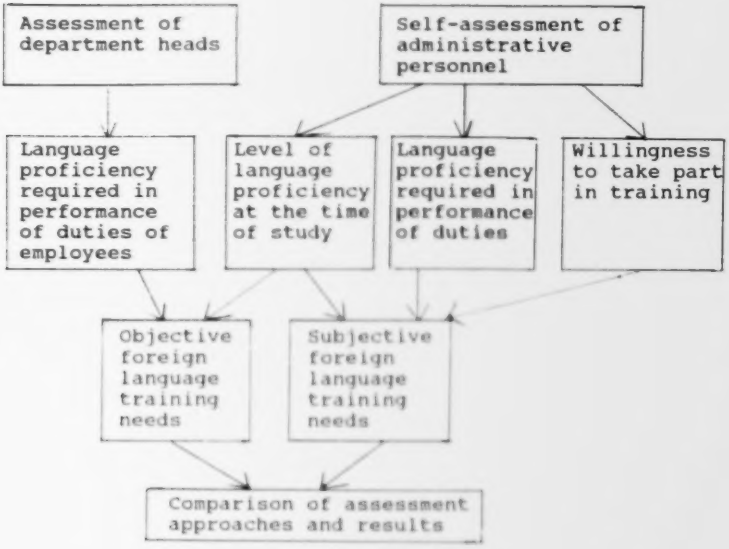
1. What is the need for foreign languages and language use situations at the time of the study and in the future in the organization?
2. What is the level of language proficiency of employees at the time of the study according to their self-assessments?

This question will be controlled by the age factor. It can be assumed that the younger employees know better how to use languages in practical situations, since language teaching has in general developed during the past 10-15 years in Finland in a more communicative direction.

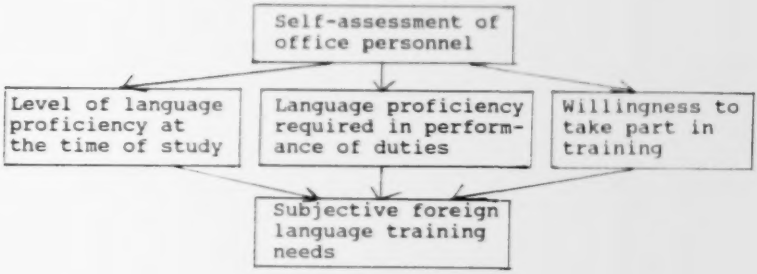
3. What is the required level of language proficiency of employees according to the assessment of the organization?
4. How motivated are the employees to participate in language training?
5. Are the methods of determining language training needs used in this study adaptable to companies and other organizations?

The structure of the study can be shown schematically as follows.

A. Administrative personnel: Assessment of foreign language training needs


Assessment of department heads
Self-assessment of administrative personnel
Language proficiency required in performance of duties of employees
Level of language proficiency at the time of study
Language proficiency required in performance of duties
Willingness to take part in training
Objective foreign language training needs
Subjective foreign language training needs
Comparison of assessment approaches and results

B. Office personnel: Assessment of foreign language training needs


Self-assessment of office personnel
Level of language proficiency at the time of study
Language proficiency required in performance of duties
Willingness to take part in training
Subjective foreign language training needs

6. METHODS

6.1. Personnel involved in the study

Those involved in the study were all employees from the following departments in the Finnish Ministry of the Interior:

General Management Department
Department of Provincial and Municipal Administration
Police Department
Rescue Department
Department of Regional Policy

Only the Headquarters of the Frontier Guard Establishment was not included in the mandate for the study. The employees were divided into three groups as follows:

Administrative personnel	129
Office personnel	90
Department heads	5

The grouping "administrative personnel" includes high-level administrative officials, officials on the refendary level and other corresponding officials. The grouping "office personnel" includes, in addition to regular office personnel, also janitorial personnel.

6.2. Preparing the measuring instrument

The study was carried out with the aid of three questionnaires, one for each personnel group (Appendices 1, 2, 3). Information about the Ministry and about the required languages and language use situations was gathered during the first phase of the study, in December 1986, by means of interviews of department heads. In addition to the results of the interviews, various other studies were used in the preparation of the questionnaires (Yli-Renko 1982, Berggren 1982, Takala-Mehtäläinen 1986). For this reason it was not considered necessary to conduct actual pre-tests. The Director of Training of the Ministry checked the comprehensibility of the

questionnaires.

The items of the questionnaire 1 (Administrative personnel) belong to the different problem areas as follows:
Need for foreign languages and language use situations: 1, 2, 10, 13
The level of language proficiency: 3, 4, 6, 8, 12
The language training needs in self-assessments of employees: 5, 7, 9, 12
Motivation: 11, 14, 15
Background information on the personnel: 16 - 21

6.3. Data gathering

The questionnaires were distributed by the Director of Training with the help of the Heads of Departments and training contact personnel. This took place in January (Administrative personnel) and February (Office personnel and department heads) of 1987. Telephone follow-ups were made in cases of delayed response.

The percentage of return for administrative personnel was 81 %. 102 of the returned 105 questionnaires were analyzed. Since the purpose of the study was pragmatic, i.e., the planning of needed language training, the returned questionnaires of two individuals who left the service of the Ministry were not included in the study. One returned questionnaire was incomplete. The percentage of return for office personnel was 73 %. 66 questionnaires were returned, of which two were blank and three incomplete. The remaining 61 questionnaires were analyzed. The overall percentage of return can be considered to be fair. All the heads of departments (N = 5) responded to their questionnaire.

7. RESULTS

7.1. Administrative personnel

The results are given in terms of frequency, percentages and means. It should be noted that percentage results may present a somewhat misleading picture in cases of low frequency.

7.1.1. Research group profile

31 % of the administrative personnel participating in the study were women, 69 % were men. The total number of participants was 102. Age distribution within the group was:

Under 25	1 %
25 - 35	28 %
36 - 45	54 %
46 - 55	13 %
Over 55	4 %

97 % of the participants were of Finnish-speaking background, 3 % Swedish-speaking. 80 % had completed academic degrees at a university, while 20 % had completed studies at lower-level institutions of learning. The participants are divided as follows according to profession:

Researchers	11 %
Planners	14 %
Office and department heads	21 %
Supervisors	24 %
Engineers	3 %
Referendaries	7 %
Governmental secretaries (and those at similar levels)	5 %
Departmental secretaries (and those at similar levels)	13 %

Almost all the respondents reported having studied at least three languages: 89 % of them had studied German, 97 % had studied English, and in addition Swedish (the remaining 3 % were Swedish-speaking). 30 % of them had studied Swedish only

in school, 42 % had studied English only in school (half of these only in high school), 62 % of them had studied German only in school (44 % only in high school). Most of the remaining had continued their studies in these languages after having left school, either at the university, at other institutions of higher study or in various courses in Finland or abroad. 24 individuals had studied French, and 12 Russian. More than half of them had not started studying these languages until after they had left school. In addition, 20 individuals had studied various other languages, such as Norwegian, Danish, Spanish, Chinese, Greek and Italian (17 after having left school).

7.1.2. Foreign language needs and language use situations

All the department heads and 69 % of the respondents considered Swedish to be the most important foreign language for administrative personnel. English was considered to be the most important language by 22 % of the respondents. 7 % of the respondents considered English and Swedish to be of equal importance, and 2 % considered German to be the most important language.

Table 2 shows what languages administrative personnel made use of in their work during the immediately previous year, and how often they needed to use these languages orally and/or in writing.

Table 2. Known languages used by administrative personnel during previous year

Language	Not used		Used						Total
			several times a year		every month		every week		
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N =
Swedish	3	3	27	27	32	31	40	39	102
English	12	12	43	43	23	23	22	22	100
German	41	48	34	39	8	9	3	4	86
French	15	63	6	25	2	8	1	4	24
Russian	8	80	2	20	-	-	-	-	10
Other	8	23	19	54	7	20	1	3	35

In respect to frequency of use, the most important languages for administrative personnel are Swedish, English and German, in that order. The overwhelming majority needed Swedish, which all of the participants knew. During the previous year 70 % of the respondents used Swedish at least monthly, and 39 % used it weekly. Nearly all the respondents (100) also knew English. Almost half of them used it in their work at least monthly during the previous year.

86 % of the respondents knew German. Noteworthy is the fact that almost half of them did not use German at all in their work during the previous year, and that most of those who did use it, used it only a few times. 24 of the respondents knew French, and of them nine used it in their work at least a few times. Ten of the respondents knew Russian, but none of them really used it in their work. Of other languages, the most used by far were Danish and Norwegian, but in these cases it was possible to manage with Swedish. Some also used Spanish and some Italian.

Table 3 shows what languages the respondents did not know, but which they could have used during the previous year.

Table 3. Languages needed, but not known, by administrative personnel

Language	Would be good to know at least a little		Needed now and then		Needed often		Needed continuously		Total
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N =
German	-	-	2	100	-		-		2
French	10	72	2	14	1	7	1	7	14
Russian	11	61	4	22	3	17	-		18
Other	17	61	5	18	6	21	-		28

Although the respondents who knew French and Russian did not need them often in their work during the previous year, there are other people in the Ministry who would have had use for these languages in their work if they had known them. Danish,

Norwegian and Spanish were the other most needed languages. Italian was also mentioned. A couple of people would also have had use for the Lapp language if they had known it.

The most precise information about language use situations was obtained for Swedish and English. Because of the limited amount of data available, it was not possible to draw any conclusions about language use situations for other languages. "Questionnaire fatigue" appeared in regard to the questions involving language use situations. The tabulating of the language use situations for Swedish and English was, for financial reasons, done manually due to a lack of accurate assessments.

An analysis of the data shows that Swedish and English were used most frequently - even weekly - during the previous year in the reading of professional literature. An oral knowledge of the language was not needed in either case as often as a reading knowledge. The largest groups were found in the "several times a year" category. The most important oral language use situations for Swedish were divided quite evenly into the following groupings: everyday situations, social contacts, discussions about the day's happenings, showing visitors around the Ministry, visits to offices and institutions abroad, participation in meetings (primarily in a listening capacity), and taking messages on the telephone. English was used orally mostly in everyday situations and social contacts. The most important written language use situations in Swedish involved the writing of routine and undemanding professional correspondence, and translations from Swedish to Finnish. In the case of English, written language use involved primarily translations from English to Finnish.

Those individuals who, in their own opinion, did not know Swedish and English well enough, would have needed these languages especially in oral communication situations, primarily for participating in meetings, congresses and seminars both in a listening capacity and in more active ways such as taking part in discussions, making presentations and

serving as chairmen of sessions.

Language use situations for other languages were not mentioned very frequently. In the case of German, the most important were occasional oral use in everyday situations and the reading of memoranda and reports.

7.1.3. Language proficiency

The respondents assessed their own language proficiency. Oral skill, reading skill and writing skill were given separate assessments. Since it was desirable to evaluate the overall language proficiency of all personnel, the Swedish-language proficiency of the three Swedish-speaking individuals was also included. An attempt was made to check the reliability of the assessments by comparing them with the respondents' earlier language training. In general it can be said that the respondents assessed their language proficiency carefully and critically. Five levels of language proficiency were used, and these proved to be adequate. In the case of Swedish and English oral language skill, the respondents had the possibility of making personal changes, but they did so rarely. For precise descriptions of the degree of language proficiency, see Appendix 1. The different levels of proficiency can be described briefly as follows:

Level	Proficiency	Class
1	Poor	Elementary proficiency
2	Fair	Limited working proficiency
3	Satisfactory	Minimum professional proficiency
4	Good	Full professional proficiency
5	Very good	Native-like proficiency
(6	Native	Native proficiency)

This sixth category was added for the three Swedish-speaking Finns.

Table 4 shows the oral language skill of administrative personnel according to their own assessment.

Table 4. Oral language skill of administrative personnel

Language	Oral language skill												
	Poor Level 1		Fair Level 2		Satis-factory Level 3		Good Level 4		Very good Level 5		Native Level 6		Total
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N =
Swedish	14	14	21	21	38	37	18	18	7	7	3	3	101
English	20	20	27	28	30	30	16	16	6	6	-		99
German	43	52	25	30	13	16	2	2	-		-		83
French	17	81	2	9	1	5	1	5	-		-		21
Russian	5	71	2	29	-		-		-		-		7
Other	14	41	14	41	4	12	1	3	1	3	-		34

The best oral language skill of administrative personnel was in Swedish. Their average level of skill was 2.92 (Fair). About 65 % of those who knew Swedish spoke it at least satisfactorily, and a quarter of them spoke it at least well. There were almost as many speakers of English as speakers of Swedish, but with lower language skill. Their average level of skill was 2.61. About half of the respondents who knew English spoke it at least satisfactorily. The average level of oral language skill for German was 1.69. Only 18 % (15 individuals) spoke it at least satisfactorily, more than half spoke it poorly. Nor did the speakers of French (average level 1.33) and Russian (average level 1.29) speak those languages especially well. Norwegian and Danish were the most common other languages known. 33 individuals reported that they knew Norwegian, and of these 28 reported that they knew Danish. Judging on the basis of their language studies and their own reports, most of these individuals spoke Swedish to speakers of Norwegian and Danish. Although some of these people had attended intensive courses in these languages, it was difficult to determine who was actually able to speak Norwegian or Danish on the basis of their answers. Judging from the respondents' assessments, conversations with Danes and Norwegians did not go very well. Only six individuals reported getting along at least satisfactorily in Norwegian, and five of them also in Danish conversations. With respect to other languages, one person reported being able to speak

Spanish fairly well, and two poorly. One person spoke Italian poorly and two spoke Chinese, one poorly and the other even worse (level = 1/2).

For the purpose of planning training programs, it is worthwhile looking at the relationship between the age of respondents and their language proficiency in the most frequently known languages. Table 5 shows the distribution of oral language skill in Swedish, English and German within the different age groups. The lowest and highest age groups (under 25 and over 55 years) are omitted, since there were so few individuals in these groups.

Table 5. Age and oral language skill of administrative personnel

Oral language skill Level	Age group 25 - 35			36 - 45			46 - 55		
	Swe %	Eng %	Ger %	Swe %	Eng %	Ger %	Swe %	Eng %	Ger %
1 Poor	7	10	57	11	22	49	33	27	58
2 Fair	21	31	30	25	27	33	-	9	17
3 Satisfactory	55	45	13	31	24	14	34	37	25
4 Good	14	11	-	20	18	4	17	27	-
5 Very good	3	3	-	9	9	-	8	-	-
6 Native	-	-	-	4	-	-	8	-	-
Mean	2.80	2.65	1.56	3.00	2.65	1.73	2.91	2.63	1.67
N =	29	29	23	55	55	45	12	11	12

From this table it can be seen that the Swedish, English and German oral language skill of administrative personnel was approximately the same for all age groups. Those above the age of 35 perhaps spoke Swedish (ignoring, however, those with native proficiency) and German a little better than those who are younger.

Table 6 shows the text comprehension of administrative personnel according to their own assessment.

Table 6. Text comprehension of administrative personnel

Language	Text comprehension												
	Poor Level 1		Fair Level 2		Satis-factory Level 3		Good Level 4		Very good Level 5		Native Level 6		Total
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N =
Swedish	2	2	9	9	29	28	35	34	24	24	3	3	102
English	4	4	22	22	35	36	22	22	16	16	-		99
German	18	23	23	29	26	33	11	14	1	1	-		79
French	10	50	6	30	1	5	2	10	1	5	-		20
Russian	4	50	3	38	1	12	-		-		-		8
Other	7	16	12	27	20	46	4	9	1	2	-		44

As can be seen from the table, all the respondents reported that they were able to read Swedish language texts, 90 % of them at least satisfactorily. The average comprehension level for Swedish was 3.78 (= Good). Almost all of them were also able to read English; 75 % of the respondents at least satisfactorily. The average comprehension level for English texts was 3.24 (= Satisfactory). Many of the respondents could also read German, but the comprehension level was appreciably lower than for Swedish and English. The average level was 2.42 (= Fair). There were few who were able to read French and Russian. The average comprehension level for French was 2.00 and for Russian 1.62. Other languages which respondents could read were the same ones for which oral language skill was reported, but even more individuals were able to understand Norwegian and Danish language texts on the basis of their knowledge of Swedish (41 and 37 individuals respectively). The average comprehension level was Fair. There were also four individuals who could read Spanish, one of them well, the others not quite as well. Two respondents were able to read Italian language texts. The comprehension level of one of them was Fair, the comprehension level of the other was Poor. One individual was able to read a little Chinese.

Table 7 shows the distribution of Swedish, English and German text comprehension within the age groups 25 - 35, 36 - 45 and 46 - 55.

Table 7. Age and text comprehension of administrative personnel

Text comprehension Level	Age group 25 - 35 Swe %	Eng %	Ger %	36 - 45 Swe %	Eng %	Ger %	46 - 55 Swe %	Eng %	Ger %
1 Poor	-	3	25	-	6	24	8	-	9
2 Fair	7	14	42	13	24	27	-	17	18
3 Satisfactory	34	45	33	25	26	27	22	58	46
4 Good	35	24	-	36	26	22	23	8	18
5 Very good	24	14	-	22	18	-	39	17	9
6 Native	-	-	-	4	-	-	8	-	-
Mean	3.76	3.24	2.08	3.78	3.28	2.46	4.08	3.25	3.00
N =	29	29	24	55	54	41	13	12	11

Text comprehension in English is on the same level in all age groups. Of those who knew Swedish, those over 45 years old could read it better than their younger colleagues, and the level of German text comprehension increased with the age of the respondents.

Table 8 shows the foreign language writing skill of administrative personnel according to their own assessment.

Table 8. Foreign language writing skill of administrative personnel.

Language	Writing skill Poor Level 1 N	%	Fair Level 2 N	%	Satisfactory Level 3 N	%	Good Level 4 N	%	Very good Level 5 N	%	Native Level 6 N	%	Total N =
Swedish	10	10	24	23	38	37	26	26	2	2	2	2	102
English	20	20	33	34	30	31	12	12	3	3	-		98
German	31	44	23	33	13	19	3	4	-		-		70
French	7	54	3	23	3	23	-		-		-		13
Russian	1	33	1	33	1	33	-		-		-		3
Other	12	67	3	17	1	6	1	5	1	5	-		18

All the participants in the study reported that they could

write Swedish, and the average level of writing skill was 2.92 (= Satisfactory). Almost all who knew English stated that they could write it, the average level of writing skill being 2.44. 81 % of those who knew German could write it, with an average level of 1.82 (= Fair). About half of those who knew French stated that they could write it, with an average level of 1.69 (= Fair). 15 respondents reported being able to communicate in writing in Norwegian and Danish, at an average level of Fair. Four could write Spanish, one of them even satisfactorily. One respondent was able to write Italian.

Table 9 shows the distribution of writing skill in foreign languages within the different age groups.

Table 9. Age and foreign language writing skill of administrative personnel

Writing skill	Age group 25 - 35			36 - 45			46 - 55		
Level	Swe %	Eng %	Ger %	Swe %	Eng %	Ger %	Swe %	Eng %	Ger %
1 Poor	7	17	67	11	21	34	7	8	27
2 Fair	31	35	21	24	34	41	8	42	27
3 Satisfactory	38	42	12	34	26	19	46	25	37
4 Good	24	3	-	25	15	6	31	25	9
5 Very good	-	3	-	2	4	-	8	-	-
6 Native	-	-	-	4	-	-	-	-	-
Mean	2.79	2.41	1.46	2.95	2.47	1.97	3.23	2.67	2.27
N =	29	29	24	55	53	32	13	12	11

It can be seen from the chart that the writing skill of administrative personnel in Swedish and German was slightly higher in the more advanced age groups. In the case of English, those over 45 years of age were able to write slightly better than their younger colleagues. From the standpoint of language training planning, however, these differences between age groups are not significant.

7.1.4. The need for foreign language proficiency as assessed by department heads

The official assessment of what languages and what proficiency level were needed by administrative personnel in the performance of their duties was made by the heads of the various departments of the Ministry. According to their assessment, as mentioned earlier (7.1.2.), the need for both Swedish and English is especially great, and of these Swedish is the most important. The need for foreign languages will increase in the near future in all five departments involved in the study. The overall assessment of the foreign language proficiency of the personnel of the Ministry was that it left something to be desired. In particular, oral communication was identified as a sensitive area.

The assessments by the heads of departments of foreign language needs of their personnel were included for 84 individuals who also assessed their own language proficiency. This group is called the "Training need group" later in this study. According to the assessment of the heads of department, some individuals did not need any foreign languages in the performance of their duties.

Table 10 shows the quantitative and qualitative oral foreign language needs according to the assessment of department heads.

Table 10. Oral foreign language skill needed in the performance of their duties by administrative personnel (Ministry's assessment)

Language	Oral language skill										
	Poor Level 1		Fair Level 2		Satisfactory Level 3		Good Level 4		Very good Level 5		Total
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N =
Swedish	1	1	3	4	36	43	38	45	6	7	84
English	1	1	9	11	46	56	23	28	3	4	82
German	29	81	3	8	4	11	-		-		36
French	2		-		-		1		-		3
Russian	2		1		-		-		-		3

All the administrative personnel whose language proficiency needs were assessed should be able to speak Swedish, and most of them should be able to speak English at least satisfactorily. A speaking knowledge of German was considerably less needed, nor did the level of and skill in German need to be as high as in the case of Swedish and English. The need for and skills in French and Russian was very small. It was sufficient if there were a few individuals who knew enough of these languages to be able to get by somehow in everyday situations. Oral skill in Swedish needed to be on the average 3.49 (Satisfactory to Good), in English 3.14 (Satisfactory) and in German 1.31 (Poor).

Table 11 shows the foreign language text comprehension needs of administrative personnel according to the assessment of heads of departments of the Ministry.

Table 11. Foreign language text comprehension levels needed in the performance of their duties by administrative personnel (Ministry's assessment)

Language	Text comprehension										
	Poor Level 1		Fair Level 2		Satis-factory Level 3		Good Level 4		Very good Level 5		Total
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N =
Swedish	-		1	1	22	26	31	37	30	36	84
English	-		8	10	40	48	22	27	12	15	82
German	15	42	6	16	15	42	-		-		36
French	2		-		-		1		-		3
Russian	2		1		-		-		-		3

The required level of text comprehension is clearly higher in all three of the leading languages than the oral skill required in them. Approximately 75 % of administrative personnel needed to be able to read Swedish language texts at least at the level "Good". It was sufficient that 40 % of them were able to read English language professional texts at least at the "Good" level. For German it was sufficient that 40 % of the adminis-

trative personnel was able to read written texts at the level Satisfactory. The level of text comprehension needed for the performance of duties in the Ministry should be on the average 4.02 (Good) for Swedish, 3.38 (Satisfactory) for English and 2.00 (Fair) for German. In addition, three individuals needed to be able to read French language texts. One of them needed to be able to read trade brochures and usage instructions well, and to be able to read professional literature with the aid of a dictionary. The others needed only to be able to understand questionnaires, instructions, timetables, etc., dealing with everyday life. Two individuals needed to be able to read Russian language texts dealing with everyday life. In addition to them, one person needed to be able to make something out of professional Russian literature with the aid of a dictionary.

Table 12 shows the foreign language writing skill needed by administrative personnel in the performance of their duties as assessed by heads of department.

Table 12. Foreign language writing skill needed by administrative personnal in the performance of their duties (Ministry's assessment)

Language	Writing skill										
	Poor Level 1		Fair Level 2		Satisfactory Level 3		Good Level 4		Very good Level 5		Total
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N =
Swedish	-		10	12	43	50	27	33	4	5	84
English	5	6	25	30	39	47	10	13	3	4	82
German	29	82	3	9	3	9	-		-		35
French	1		-		-		1		-		2
Russian	1										1

As can be seen from the table, the writing skill demands in Swedish were greater than those in the other languages. About 90 % of administrative personnel needed to be able to write Swedish at least satisfactorily. For English it was sufficient that 60 % were able to write satisfactorily, and for German only 9 %. The average writing skill level needed in Swedish was

3.26 (Satisfactory), in English 2.70 (almost Satisfactory) and in German 1.26 (Poor).

7.1.5. Foreign language training needs

The foreign language training needs of administrative personnel were determined in two ways:

1) by comparing required foreign language proficiency as assessed by the heads of department with actual language proficiency of the administrative personnel (objective training needs =

The level of language proficiency required for the effective performance of duties - The present level of language proficiency)

2) by asking the participants to assess their own language training needs (subjective training needs). The self-assessment results include the answers of the entire group of administrative personnel (N = 102) and separately the answers of the so-called "Training need group" (N = 84; cf. p. 35 above). Table 13 shows the quantitative language training needs of administrative personnel in Swedish, English and German. The results of the language training needs are given in detail in Appendices 4 and 5.

Table 13. The quantitative language training needs of administrative personnel expressed as percentages

Language	Needed language training											
	Oral skill				Reading				Writing			
	Objective needs		Subjective needs		Objective needs		Subjective needs		Objective needs		Subjective needs	
	%	N	N= 84	N= 102	%	N	N= 84	N= 102	%	N	N= 84	N= 102
Swedish	55	84	75	73	42	84	57	55	38	84	73	68
English	60	82	71	67	33	82	62	59	45	82	69	64
German	30	36	43	42	49	36	39	39	37	35	39	38

The results show that the administrative employees had a more critical attitude toward the adequacy of their language proficiency (subjective training needs) in the performance of their duties than those duties, in the opinion of the department heads (objective training needs), actually require. The self-assessed language training needs were greater. The self-assessments of the whole group of administrative personnel (N = 102) were similar to the smaller so-called "Language training group" (N = 84).

In regard to language skills, the subjective and objective training needs were also analogous. Most training was needed in accordance with the assessments of both Ministry and the administrative employees in oral proficiency in Swedish and in English. There was percentagewise less training needed in reading and writing in Swedish and English than in oral proficiency. The largest differences, however, between the Ministry assessments and the self-assessments were, in the main languages, in writing Swedish and reading English. Based on the requirements of their work duties (Ministry's opinion), 38 % of administrative personnel should have better writing skill in Swedish than they have. All of 73 % of employees (Training need group) themselves thought they should know how to write Swedish better. For reading English, the equivalent percentages were 33 and 62.

As to German language, training was needed much less than in Swedish and English. There were no great differences between the assessments of different groups, and training was needed rather evenly in all language skills.

The qualitative language training needs were in the opinion of the Ministry of the magnitude of 1 - 1,5 proficiency level in all languages and all language skills. In the opinion of administrative employees themselves, their language proficiency should be 1,5 - 2 levels higher than it was. On the other hand, there were also those in the Ministry whose language proficiency was better than their duties require (App. 4).

There was only a very small objective need for language proficiency in French and Russian in the Ministry, so the training needs in these cases were investigated individually. Three people needed oral language training in French. Two of them could not speak French at all, but they were expected to have level 1 in oral language skills. In their own opinion, their oral language skill in French was inadequate, and it should have been on level 1. One person, whose work required good oral language skill in French, had that degree of skill.

The work of three individuals required the lowest level of oral language skill in Russian and one person needed to be able to speak it fairly well (level 2), but none of them was able to speak Russian at all. Only one of them was aware of the Russian language requirement and considered it important to know a little of it.

In the opinion of administrative personnel themselves, they felt they had a greater need for training in oral language skills in French and Russian than the official assessment. 20 individuals in the entire group of respondents (N = 102) considered their oral language skill in French to be inadequate for the performance of their duties. However, they did not feel that their work required an especially high level of language skill. An ability to manage in everyday situations would be sufficient (level 2).

In the case of Russian, 12 persons in the entire group (N = 102) of administrative personnel felt that they needed language training, for most of whom an elementary knowledge (level 1) would be sufficient.

26 individuals considered their oral language skill in Danish to be inadequate. 24 of them also felt that their oral language skill in Norwegian was insufficient. Less than half of them had any oral skill at all in either language. The average level of the oral skill they would like to have was satisfactory (level 3). The average training need was on the order of 1 - 2 skill levels.

The reading skill training needs in French and Russian were

also rather small. Three individuals should have been able to read French. One of them could, in fact, read it well, satisfying work requirements. The other two knew no French at all, but were well aware that they should have been able to read French texts on a beginning language level in order to perform their work duties.

All of 16 individuals in the entire group of respondents (N = 102) were of the opinion that their reading ability in French was inadequate and half of them thought that a text comprehension level of at least satisfactory (level 3) was necessary.

Three people should have been able to read Russian, in the opinion of the Department heads, two of them poorly (level 1) and one fairly well (level 2), but none of them had such skills, nor were any of them aware of their training needs. The official expressed wish of the Ministry was that, in addition to those already mentioned, one more person should have been able to read French and Russian, but no specific person was named.

Ten individuals in the entire group of respondents (N = 102) considered their reading skill in Russian to be inadequate, and that the average required level should be fair (level 2).

There were also training needs in reading skills in the opinion of the administrative personnel themselves, in Norwegian, Danish and Spanish. 30 individuals thought that their text comprehension skill in Danish was inadequate, and 26 of them thought that their reading skill in Norwegian was also inadequate and that the average required level should be satisfactory (level 3). It is worth noting that the present skill level of a third of them was nil.

There was very little demand for writing skills in French and Russian in the Ministry. Two people were supposed to be able to write French. One of them was able to, but the other one did not consider a writing skill in French to be necessary in his work. One person was supposed to be able to write Russian, but he was not able to, nor did he consider it necessary. 8 individuals in the entire group of respondents (N = 102) were dissatisfied with their ability to write French, and most of them

thought that all they needed was the lowest level skill (Poor). 3 individuals considered their writing skill in Russian to be inadequate.

18 individuals considered their writing skills in other languages to be inadequate. 16 of them thought that their writing skill in Danish did not meet the requirements of their work. 14 of these also did not have sufficient writing skills in Norwegian. In both cases the present skill level of a third of them was nil. In addition, one respondent considered his writing skill in Spanish to be insufficient, and one felt his writing skill in the Lapp language was not adequate.

7.1.6. Motivation

An attempt was made to determine how motivated the administrative personnel were to take part in programs of language training by asking them what specific advantage they had gained from their language proficiency and what specific disadvantage had been occasioned by their inadequate language proficiency or lack of language proficiency, and in which languages and what skills they would like to have training. The results were analysed manually.

More than half the administrative personnel (N = 102) left the question concerning advantage gained from language proficiency unanswered. The reason for this was maybe "questionnaire fatigue", and also the fact that language skills had not weighed heavily in career advancement considerations. The importance of language proficiency for the performance of duties was also brought out in answers to other questions. Nevertheless, 41 % of the respondents stated separately that their language proficiency had been of use in the performance of their duties. Foremost among the answers was the importance of language proficiency in international contacts, especially with the Scandinavian countries. Getting ideas from abroad and improving professional skills with the help of language proficiency was also considered important. Attention was drawn to

the saving of time brought about by not having to seek outside expertise in language questions. Language proficiency also added to job satisfaction.

32 % of the respondents (N = 102) left blank the question concerning specific disadvantaes occasioned by inadequate language proficiency or lack of language proficiency. They included those who had grown fatigued answering the long questionnaire, plus those who had experienced no disadvantage from inadequate or lacking language skills. Actually, an additional 9 individuals went to the trouble of stating that they had experienced no disadvantage. On the other hand, more than half the respondents mentioned that lack or inadequate of language proficiency had affected the performance of their duties. Examples given were the difficulty of using an interpreter, communication problems in general, failure to obtain information and excessive loss of time. Special emphasis was placed on difficulties experienced in working in international situations. Difficulties were encountered in understanding contributions made by Norwegians and Danes in seminars, and resulted in Finnish participants sitting in silence. In general, understanding telephone conversations with Scandinavians other than Swedes was felt to be problematical. Having to concentrate on language aspects was felt to be a strain. Lack of language proficiency was especially a disadvantage in contacts with Swedish-speaking municipalities. It would have been possible to participate more often in study trips, if their language proficiency had been better. The necessity to resort to interpreters when dealing with Germans, Russians and French was also felt to be unfortunate. Lack or inadequacy of language proficiency was felt to be a serious impediment to performance of professional duties.

Therefore, it was quite natural that there was a great deal of interest in language study among personnel in the Ministry of the Interior. Table 14 shows the languages, and language skills, that the administrative personnel would be interested in studying.

Table 14. Languages and language skills of interest to administrative personnel

Language	Oral communication	Written communication	Reading	Writing	Speaking and reading	Speaking and writing	All skills	Total
	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N
Swedish	33	1	-	2	5	9	18	68
English	24	1	1	1	6	12	21	66
German	8	1	-	2	1	1	12	25
French	8	-	1	1	-	-	5	15
Russian	-	-	-	1	-	-	2	3
Norwegian	9	-	1	-	-	-	1	11
Danish	9	-	1	-	-	-	1	11
Spanish	-	-	1	-	-	-	1	2
Italian	1	-	-	-	-	-	1	2

N = 102

Just about an equal number of people - approximately 66 % of all the respondents - expressed an interest in studying Swedish and English. Oral communication skills constituted the greatest training interest in Swedish, according to the respondents. The most important areas in English were conversation and general language proficiency, similarly in German and French. Among the other languages, the desire for training in oral skills in Norwegian and Danish stood out, especially in speech comprehension and the study of vocabulary in these languages differing from corresponding vocabulary in Swedish. Even more people would probably have expressed an interest in studying Norwegian and Danish, if they had not been asked to state their first preference only.

7.2. Office personnel

7.2.1. Research group profile

There was a total of 61 respondents. One of them did not wish to provide personal background information. The occupations of the remaining respondents were distributed as follows:

Secretaries	55 %
Clerks	30 %
Typists	7 %
Janitors	8 %

They were distributed by education as follows:

Elementary school	26 %
High school diplomas	29 %
Elementary school + business school	14 %
High school diploma + business school	24 %
Other diploma (office work school)	2 %
Academic degrees	5 %

93 % of the respondents were women, 7 % men.

They were distributed by age among the following groups:

Under 25	17 %
25 - 35	20 %
36 - 45	46 %
46 - 55	10 %
Over 55	7 %

97 % of the respondents were Finnish-speaking, 3 % Swedish-speaking.

Almost all of them had studied Swedish, 68 % of them had studied English, 70 % German and 25 % French. 27 % of the respondents had studied other languages (Russian, Italian, Spanish, Greek, Chinese, Latin). 63 % of the respondents (38 individuals) had been involved in language study during the previous two years. 13 individuals had studied only Swedish, 4 only English, and one each only German and Russian, while 19 had studied more than one language during the previous two year period. Several of them had studied both Swedish and English,

many had also studied English and French, and many Swedish, English and German. Several people had studied Italian, Spanish and Greek, and even Chinese.

7.2.2. Foreign language needs and language use situation

53 % of office personnel reported Swedish to be the most important foreign language. English was a close second (42 %), while German was the most important language in the opinion of only 3 % of the respondents. English and Swedish were equally important for 2 % of them.

Table 15 shows what languages office personnel made use of in their work during the previous year either orally and/or in written form. All the data are based on the self-assessments of the office personnel.

Table 15. Language needs of office personnel during previous year

Language	Not used		Used						Total
			several times a year		monthly		weekly		
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N
Swedish	3	5	13	22	19	32	24	41	59
English	7	14	18	36	7	14	18	36	50
German	19	59	4	13	5	16	4	12	32
Other	6	50	5	42	1	8	-		12

The most important languages for office personnel, in terms of frequency of usage, can be seen to be Swedish and English. Only a few have had use for German. Of other languages, French has been needed several times during the year, and Norwegian monthly.

Table 16 shows what languages the respondents do not know, but

which they could have used during the previous year.

Table 16. Languages needed, but not known, by office personnel

Language	Would be good to know at least a little	Needed now and then	Needed often	Needed continuously	Total
	N	N	N	N	N
Swedish	-	-	1	-	1
English	1	2	2	-	5
German	4	3	1	2	10
Other	9	5	2	1	17

Even though the greater part of those who knew German did not need to use it during the previous year at all, 10 other individuals could have made use of it, if they had known it. French, Russian, Spanish and Danish were mentioned by other respondents. A couple of people reported having had use for Greek.

Information about language use situations was collected by use of an open-ended question. The most important oral language use situations mentioned were waiting on customers, telephone conversations and showing visitors around. The ability to read foreign languages was needed in reading letters and forms, proofreading, interpreting documents and using computer English. Linguistic insecurity was experienced especially in telephone conversations and other spoken language situations.

7.2.3. Language proficiency

The office personnel assessed their own language proficiency on the basis of six skill levels (cf. exact descriptions in App. 2). The different levels can be characterized as follows:

Level	Proficiency	Class
1	Minimal	No real language proficiency
2	Poor	Elementary proficiency
3	Fair	Limited working proficiency
4	Satisfactory	Minimum professional proficiency
5	Good	Full professinal proficiency
6	Very good	Native-like professional proficiency
(7	Native	Native proficiency)

Table 17 shows the self-assessments of office personnel of their oral language ability in various languages.

Table 17. Oral foreign language ability of office personnel

Language	Oral language skill													
	Min-imal		Poor		Fair		Satis-fac-tory		Good		Very good		Native	Total
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N %	N =
Swedish	1	2	15	26	19	33	13	22	8	14	-		2 3	58
English	3	6	7	13	14	27	17	33	8	15	3	6	-	52
German	4	12	14	43	9	27	3	9	3	9	-		-	33
Other	5	38	4	31	2	15	1	8	1	8	-		-	13

Almost all of the respondents reported they could speak both Swedish and English to some extent: 39 % in the case of Swedish, 54 % in the case of English, at least satisfactorily. About half of them knew a little German. 5 could speak French, one of them satisfactorily, the others fairly or poorly. One person could speak a little Russian, similarly for Italian. Two people could speak Spanish, one person could speak Estonian. Three people could handle conversations with Norwegians and Danes.

Table 18 shows the written text comprehension in foreign languages of office personnel.

Table 18. Written text comprehension of office personnel

Language	Text comprehension														
	Min-imal		Poor		Fair		Satis-fac-tory		Good		Very good		Native		Total
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N =
Swedish	1	2	11	19	10	17	18	20	12	20	5	9	2	3	59
English	3	6	7	14	10	20	16	32	9	18	3	10	-		50
German	3	9	12	38	5	16	7	22	5	16	-		-		32
Other	5	33	1	7	5	33	3	20	1	7	-		-		15

More than half the respondents reported that they could read Swedish language texts, and half the respondents could read English language texts, at least satisfactorily. Almost half the respondents could read German language texts to some extent. As far as other languages are concerned, 7 people could read French at least fairly, one person Russian satisfactorily, 4 people Spanish fairly well, one person could read a little Estonian and one person a little Chinese. Two people were able to understand Norwegian and Danish written texts.

Table 19 shows the writing skill in foreign languages of the office personnel.

Table 19. Foreign language writing skill of office personnel

Language	Writing skill														
	Min-imal		Poor		Fair		Satis-fac-tory		Good		Very good		Native		Total
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N =
Swedish	8	15	12	22	8	15	19	35	5	9	-		2	4	54
English	8	17	7	15	8	18	12	26	10	22	1	2	-		46
German	7	23	9	29	7	23	6	19	2	6	-		-		31
Other	5	41	2	17	2	17	1	8	2	17	-		-		12

If one includes those who were able to type clean copy, 88 % of the respondents were able to write Swedish to some extent. The

corresponding percentages for English and German were 75 % and 50 %, respectively. In addition, 10 people could write French (3 at least satisfactorily), 3 could write a little Spanish, and one person each a little Italian, Russian, Estonian, Norwegian and Danish.

7.2.4. Foreign language training needs and training motivation

The language training needs of office personnel were determined solely on the basis of their own assessment.

Table 20 shows the number of office personnel who felt that their oral language skills were inadequate for the performance of their duties, and the level of skill they felt they needed.

Table 20. Office personnel: Oral language skill inadequacy, and needed level

Language	Needed level of oral language skill					
	Poor	Fair	Satis-factory	Good	Very good	Total
	N	N	N	N	N	N
Swedish	-	5	11	15	1	32
English	-	5	6	10	1	22
German	1	2	3	7	-	13
French	3	6	4	2	-	15
Russian	1	1	4	-	-	6
Spanish	2	1	1	-	-	4
Italian	-	1	-	-	-	1

The greatest number of office personnel felt that they needed training in Swedish. About half the respondents were of the opinion that their oral language skill in Swedish was inadequate. Approximately 1/3 of the respondents felt they needed training in English, and approximately 1/5 of them felt they needed training in German and French. There was felt to be little need for training in other languages.

Table 21 shows the number of office personnel who felt that their text comprehension skills in foreign languages were

inadequate, and the level of skill they felt they needed in the performance of their duties.

Table 21. Office personnel: Inadequacy of written text comprehension, and needed level of skill

Language	Needed level of reading skill					Total
	Poor	Fair	Satis-factory	Good	Very good	
	N	N	N	N	N	N
Swedish	2	2	5	12	6	27
English	1	2	7	6	8	24
German	1	2	2	4	4	13
French	3	-	7	3	-	13
Russian	3	1	1	2	-	7
Spanish	1	2	2	1	-	6
Italian	-	-	1	-	-	1

Office personnel felt they needed less training in written text comprehension than in oral language skills. The situation with respect to English was exactly the opposite, although the difference was not great. As far as other languages were concerned, the situation was the same as in the case of oral language skills.

Table 22 shows the number of office personnel who felt that their writing skills in foreign languages were inadequate.

Table 22. Office personnel: Level of writing skill in foreign languages needed by those who felt they had inadequate skill

Language	Needed level of writing skill						Total
	Min-imal	Poor	Fair	Satis-factory	Good	Very good	
	N	N	N	N	N	N	N
Swedish	-	1	5	5	7	8	26
English	-	3	3	3	6	6	21
German	-	-	2	3	2	3	10
French	-	1	1	2	3	-	7
Russian	1	1	1	-	1	-	4
Spanish	-	1	-	-	1	-	2
Italian	-	-	-	1	-	-	1

The office personnel felt that they needed slightly less training in writing skills than in the other language skills. Their work required, however, many of them to possess a writing skill level of Very Good in Swedish, English and German. A more modest modest level of skill was adequate in other languages.

Table 23 shows how motivated office personnel were to undertake language training.

Table 23. The languages, and language skills, that office personnel wished to study (first choice)

Language	Language skills					Total
	Oral communication	Reading	Writing	Speaking and reading	Speaking and writing	
	N	N	N	N	N	N
Swedish	18	1	1	3	9	32
English	8	-	1	4	12	25
German	4	1	-	1	5	11
French	2	-	-	-	5	7
Russian	1	-	-	1	-	2(+1)
Spanish	-	-	-	-	1	1(+2)
Italian	-	-	-	-	1	1

N = 61

Everyone who considered his or her knowledge of Swedish to be inadequate for the performance of duties, also wished to study it. Oral communication was considered to be most important, and 6 people stressed especially oral comprehension. 25 people were primarily interested in studying English, and once again oral communication was given preference. Office personnel had writing skills as a desired study object alongside of oral communication. One person also wished to study the basic elements of Russian, and two wished the same in the case of Spanish (the numbers in parentheses in the last column).

8. ADAPTABILITY OF THE STRATEGY OF THE STUDY IN OTHER SITUATIONS

The question of the adaptability of the study-strategy used in this survey to the determination of language training needs in other situations is answered on the basis of the results of this study and an investigation made subsequently on the basis of it in another organization.

The methods used in this study proved to be adequate and easy to apply. Information about the Ministry and about required languages and language use situations was gathered during the first phase of the study by means of interviews of department heads. Additionally, by interviewing the department heads the investigator had the opportunity to get acquainted with the organization and the people in it, which made the gathering of data a fairly easy task.

The interviews served as the basis for the questionnaires. The questionnaires used in this study proved to correspond to the conditions in the Ministry. They covered all the relevant problem areas and were generally clear. The first and second questions, treating the need for, use of and importance of language proficiency did in fact cause some confusion and duplication in the answers, which was sorted out in the tabulation stage by making use of information supplied concerning languages studied and the language proficiency self-assessments.

The following clarifications should be made regarding the first two questions which were the same in the questionnaires of administrative personnel and office personnel (Appendices 1 and 2). Question 1 should be clarified as follows:

1. Estimate how often you have <u>used</u> (instead of <u>needed</u>) languages <u>that you know</u> in your work.
   Languages I know I have not used at all, etc.

Question number 2 should be clarified and simplified as

follows:

2. If you have needed a language in your work that you don't know at the moment, which language/languages would you have needed?

Languages I don't know	I have not needed at all	If I had known I could have used couple of times in a year	monthly	weekly etc.

The rating scales for language proficiency worked well. The respondents had the opportunity to add to or delete from the descriptions of different levels in Swedish and English, but practically no changes were made. However, the use of different questionnaires in different groups under study, in this case administrative personnel and office personnel, is rather laborious, particularly if many people are involved. It would be possible , and for the study also useful, to use the same questionnaire for all personnel in order to gather the same type of data. This will be discussed more in detail later in this chapter.

The language use situations were adequate. No comments were made concerning them. However, the assessment of language use situations made the questionnaire for the administrative personnel too long, resulting in failure to answer questions concerning them carefully. The simpler questionnaire given to office personnel without situation lists apparently did not cause any "questionnaire fatigue", and was in this respect better. The information gathered from the language use situations is, however, very important in establishing the aims and defining the contents of language training. Therefore the questions concerning language use situations should be placed at the beginning of the questionnaire, before the rating scales of language proficiency. That would also make the assessment of language proficiency easier and more reliable. The last question concerning the situations one would have encountered if one had known the language better, could be left out. All the information needed will be gathered with the questions concern-

ing situations one has encountered and the sufficiency of language proficiency in various situations.

The respondents should additionally be especially encouraged to answer all the questions carefully. In this study attention was not paid enough to this.

The questionnaire of the department heads (App. 3) used for the assessment of language proficiency required by the Ministry in the performance of duties and of the future needs of languages in the Ministry worked out well.

The self-assessment of language proficiency, as mentioned in an earlier chapter, was for practical reasons the only possibility in this study. The assessments were controlled against the employees' language studies. The assessed levels of language proficiency in reading and writing corresponded in general to the language studies. Speaking proficiency was usually at a little lower level than the language studies would have led one to expect. Many respondents commented that the "high speaking threshold" was the cause of the lower level of oral language proficiency. On the basis of my long experience as a language teacher (lecturer of Swedish, German and Finnish in Senior secondary school and at the University 1965 - 82) I can safely say that the self-assessments of language proficiency gave quite reliable information for the purpose of planning foreign language training. The results of this study support the results of Oskarsson's investigations (1978) concerning the ability of adults to self-assess their own language proficiency.

Two methods were used in this study in the determination of language training needs. The different conceptions of language training needs appearing in the self-assessments of the employees and the assessments of the department heads on behalf of the Ministry have been discussed in detail in Chapter 7.1.5. The language training needs were analogous in accordance with the assessments of both groups although rather great differ-

ences were noticed in the assessments of oral skills in Swedish, reading skills in English and writing skills in Swedish between the groups. There were many more employees who in their own opinion needed language training in those skills than appeared in the organization's official assessment.

The "high speaking threshold" mentioned above increases in the self-assessments the language training needs, especially in Swedish, which is the language most needed. The fear of making mistakes in speaking causes shyness. In fact, language training is necessary to lower the "high speaking threshold". The high threshold level in speaking makes the requirements of proficiency level even higher.

As far as English reading skills are concerned, the level of "minimal professional proficiency" required by the Ministry is de facto not sufficient. The reading of professional texts with a dictionary is very laborious. The employees themselves commented on the excessive wasting of time involved in trying to read a text with a dictionary and not getting the needed information out of it.

The cause of the great difference between the self-assessments and the official assessments of language training needs in Swedish writing skills is the same as in the case of English reading skills. The work requires, according to the department heads, routine-like writing of letters, simple reports and memoranda. The administrative employees consider it important to be able to compose more demanding letters, reports and memoranda with a more official content. The statements of employees show that it is difficult and time-consuming to make use of outside help.

In addition to the facts explained above, there is one more reason to emphasize the self-assessments. The department heads did not mention anything about the language training needs in Danish and in Norwegian, although the need for these languages came up in the interviews. It is obvious that there is need for

training, judging from the background studies, as well as from the statements of the employees themselves.

The results of this study indicate that self-assessments give more realistic information about language training needs than official assessments. More research will be needed, however, to prove the general validity of this. For the purpose of planning language training courses, it seems obvious, on the basis of the results of this study, that self-assessments by personnel give enough relevant information. The higher ratings for training needs also indicate the possible presence of motivation for training, which is especially important in language learning. In addition, brush-up courses, as well as supplementary training courses are necessary to keep up language proficiency anyway. Language training can never be considered to be given in vain.

I already had the opportunity to experiment with the methods of this study in another organization in making interviews for the purpose of compiling a questionnaire for a survey of the needs for languages, language use situations and language proficiency of Helsinki city personnel (Mehtäläinen 1987b). The study group consisted of 2259 city employees concerning directors, special personnel and personnel from the performance level. On the basis of interviews with directors from different administrative fields the language use situations and the language proficiency rating scales were developed for self-assessment. They were the same for all personnel groups and proved to work well (App. 6).

Taking all comments made in this chapter into consideration, the methods of determining language training needs used in this study will be readily adaptable to companies and other organizations.

9. DISCUSSION

The ultimate goal of this study was to lay the foundations for the language training policy of the government administration in Finland. The study was carried out by investigating the need for languages, the language use situations, the language proficiency and the language training needs of the personnel in the Ministry of the Interior.

As far as the needs survey of languages, assessments of language proficiency and language training needs are concerned, the results cover 81 % of administrative employees and 73 % of the office personnel. It is obvious that most of those employees who did not answer the questionnaire, perhaps do not know any foreign languages and think they have no need for them, or at least are not interested in any possible language training. For the purpose of the planning of language training, the small number of non-replies does not affect the results.

Another question involves the reliability and validity of the results. The measurement used in this study (the questionnaire) was compiled on the basis of interviews made for this study and of reliable questionnaires from other studies. The questions were designed to cover the field of language training needs of employees in the best possible way and from many angles.

An attempt was made to increase the validity of the assessments of language proficiency by dividing language proficiency into different language skills (oral skill, reading and writing) and by designing the levels on the basis of language use situations and work tasks. For the purpose of this study, the description of the levels on the basis of work tasks and self-assessment of language proficiency levels gives more relevant information than objective language tests of general language proficiency. As mentioned in the previous chapter, one proof that the descriptions of levels of language proficiency served their purpose well, is that the respondents did not make changes in them although they had the opportunity to do so in the English

and Swedish assessments.

The language proficiency assessments were controlled against the employees' language studies and found to give, in general, reliable information. The language training needs assessments were controlled by also taking the opinion of the Ministry through the department heads into consideration, and the results are analogous. The high motivation of the respondents adds to the reliability of the results. It can be stated that the results of the study give quite a reliable picture of the state of foreign languages in the Ministry of the Interior. The results are consistent with logic and with other similar studies in Finland, and thus support the reliability of this study.

From the results of the study it may be concluded that foreign language proficiency is very important to the functioning of the Ministry of the Interior. The need for foreign languages will increase in the future. The results show also that the language proficiency of the personnel is not sufficient. Since the training motivation is very high, the problem of persuading employees, who do not voluntarily seek training, to enter language courses is not relevant to the concerns of the personnel of the Ministry of the Interior.

Defined on the basis of this training needs analysis the most important general aim of foreign language teaching should be for all employees in the Ministry of the Interior oral communicative proficiency in the language use situations that they encounter in their work. However, more detailed objectives have to be set for various language courses which will be organized on the basis of this study. In addition to the actual results of this study, language use situation lists and language proficiency rating scales will be good sources for such course objectives. Only with concrete and clear objectives for each language course is it possible to get the expected results.

The most urgent need for training is in oral language skills of

Swedish and English. Obviously training is also needed in oral communication in Norwegian and Danish with special emphasis on comprehension and the vocabulary that is different from that in Swedish. In Swedish and English and also in German general refresher language training is needed as well. There would also be a need for French courses.

As far as different training forms are concerned, the most common course types are still today longer courses (e.g. from September to May, 2 hours per week). The problem of such courses is the weakening of motivation towards the end of the courses. Such long courses are suitable for maintaining training, if constant attention is paid to motivation. From the standpoint of motivation, intensive (e.g. one week and 30 hours) and half-intensive (e.g. 4 weeks and 20 hours per week) courses, particularly as training forms for oral language proficiency, are very popular. According to Berggren (1986, 45), to learn one level of language proficiency, 60 - 90 lessons are needed, depending on the situation. Good results from the suggestopedic language training have also been achieved in Finland.

It is, however, important that the contents of language training (also refresher courses) correspond to language use situations needed in work. The needs and language proficiency assessments are so detailed in this study that the entrance tests before courses are hardly necessary, or the testing can be done rather quickly in order to divide the course participants into different study groups. It would be most effective, and even necessary, from the standpoint of language training to hire a competent language teacher to organize the language training in the Ministry of the Interior and to take care of some teaching as well.

The results of this study can be utilized in considering the planning of language training in other government offices. The methods used in this study to survey the language training needs - representative guided interviews concerning the language use situations and general language needs and the

questionnaire on the basis of the interviews - is usable in assessing the language training needs of other organizations and companies as well. Even a language teacher is able to make such a survey by using the questionnaire of this study with corrections suggested in the previous chapter as the basis and following the methods step by step. Language training needs analysis forms an important stage in planning language training for adults.

The results of this study indicate that self-assessments by personnel are adequate for planning personnel foreign language training. More research is needed in order to draw definite conclusions. It would also be necessary to do follow-up research on the foreign language training organized on the basis of a language training needs survey.

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Appendix 1

Questionnaire: Administrative personnel

1. Please estimate, how often you have needed the following languages in your work during the previous year. Circle the alternative that corresponds most closely for each language. The abbreviations in parenthesis are used in subsequent questions.

	Not needed at all	a couple of times a year	monthly	weekly
1. Swedish (Swe)	1	2	3	4
2. English (Eng)	1	2	3	4
3. German (Ger)	1	2	3	4
4. French (Fre)	1	2	3	4
5. Russian (Rus)	1	2	3	4
6. Norwegian(Nor)	1	2	3	4
7. Danish (Dan)	1	2	3	4
8. Spanish (Span)	1	2	3	4
9. other,what?	1	2	3	4

Which of the languages above is the most important language for you?

2. If you had needed in your work during the previous year a language that you don't know, which language/languages would you have needed and how often would you have needed it/them? Circle the right alternative. Put a cross in the "importance" column to show how important the knowledge of these languages would have been to you or still is for you. The importance scale is as follows:
   5 = absolutely necessary all the time
   4 = continuously very useful
   3 = often useful
   2 = I would need it now and then

	Use			Importance				
	a couple of times a year	about once a month	more often than once a month	How important would this language be for you? 5	4	3	2	1
1. Swedish	1	2	3					
2. English	1	2	3					
3. German	1	2	3					
4. French	1	2	3					
5. Russian	1	2	3					
6. Norwegian	1	2	3					
7. Danish	1	2	3					
8. Spanish	1	2	3					
9. other,what?	1	2	3					

3. What would you estimate <u>your proficiency in oral Swedish and English</u> to be? The rating scales are described from 1-5 below. Each level is described briefly. Please read the descriptions carefully and circle the number which corresponds most closely to your language proficiency. Please add to the descriptions in accordance with your proficiency or delete what you don't know from the level in question.

<u>Swedish</u>

Level no.	Level description
1	I am able to manage somehow in everyday situations. I can take a foreign visitor to somebody who knows the language better than I.
2	I can manage in common everyday situations. I can manage easily in traveling, restaurant and hotel situations. I can exchange politenesses. I can manage satisfactorily in social conversation (about weather, hobbies, Finland, events of the day). I am able to welcome guests and take care of them temporarily. I can state my errand, obtain information about everyday matters.
3	I am able to follow the proceedings of meetings relatively easily. I can manage simple phone calls. I can make myself somehow understood in negotiations and in social receptions.
4	I am able to work in a foreign language, prepare meetings, and negotiations and participate in them, make suggestions, and give reasons for my opinions. I can participate actively in international congresses and training sessions. I can act fairly well as chairman. I can negotiate on the phone. I make mistakes, however, and I don't feel comfortable in very demanding language use situations.
5	I am able to represent the Ministry on all public occasions. I can conduct even difficult negotiations and act without any difficulties as chairman of different types of meetings. I can manage all possible situations easily as far as the language is concerned.

<u>English</u>

Level no.	Level description
1	I am able to manage somehow in everyday situations. I can take a foreign visitor to somebody who knows the language better than I.
2	I can manage in common everyday situations. I can manage easily in traveling, restaurant and hotel

situations. I can exchange politenesses. I can manage satisfactorily in social conversation (about weather, hobbies, Finland, events of the day). I am able to welcome guests and take care of them temporarily. I can state my errand, obtain information about everyday matters.

3 I am able to follow the proceedings of meetings relatively easily. I can manage simple phone calls. I can make myself somehow understood in negotiations and in social receptions.

4 I am able to work in a foreign language, prepare meetings, and negotiations and participate in them, make suggestions, and give reasons for my opinions. I can participate actively in international congresses and training sessions. I can act fairly well as chairman. I can negotiate on the phone. I make mistakes, however, and I don't feel comfortable in very demanding language use situations.

5 I am able to represent the Ministry on all public occasions. I can conduct even difficult negotiations and act without any difficulties as chairman of different types of meetings. I can manage all possible situations easily as far as the language is concerned.

4. Please estimate <u>your oral proficiency</u> in other languages using the same rating scales as in the previous question.

<u>List of languages</u>
German _____
French _____
Russian _____
Norwegian _____
Danish _____
Spanish _____
Other,what? _____

5. If the oral language proficiency in the languages you need in your tasks today is inadequate, please mark in the list below the level on which it, in your opinion, should be. Please use the numbers of the rating scales above.

<u>List of languages</u>
1. Swedish _____
2. English _____
3. German _____
4. French _____
5. Russian _____
6. Norwegian ____
7. Danish _____
8. Spanish _____
9. Other,what? __

6. Please estimate the level of your proficiency in text comprehension. The proficiency levels are described with the rating scales from 1-5. There is a short description for each level. Please write in the list below the number of the level which corresponds most closely to your language proficiency.

Level no.	Level description
1	I understand texts with contents concerning personal matters (e.g. letters) and questionnaires, written instructions, time tables, and other notices.
2	With the help of a dictionary, I can somewhat manage to read literature in my own field. I don't necessarily understand everything correctly.
3	I am able to read brochures and operating directions concerning my own field. With the help of a dictionary, I am able to understand a professional text and utilize what I have read.
4	The reading of professional literature does not cause any difficulties.
5	I read general purpose language and professional texts easily.

7. If the text comprehension proficiency in the languages you need in your tasks today is inadequate, please mark in the list below the level on which it, in your opinion, should be. Please use the numbers of the rating scales above.

List of languages
1. Swedish _____
2. English _____
3. German _____
4. French _____
5. Russian _____
6. Norwegian ____
7. Danish _____
8. Spanish _____
9. Other,what? __

8. Please estimate the level of your proficiency in writing. The proficiency levels are described with the rating scales from 1-5. There is a short description for each level. Please write in the list below the number of the level which corresponds most closely to your language proficiency.

Level no.	Level description
1	I am able to fill out simple questionnaires and write simple sentences.
2	I am able to write simple instructions and easy private letters.
3	I am able to write, with the help of a dictionary, routine letters concerning work, simple memoranda and reports with a few mistakes.
4	I am able to compile, with the help of a dictionary, letters even with official expressions of opinion, decisions of meetings, reports and memoranda. But I need to have the language checked by a native speaker.
5	I am able to write articles, speeches, official expressions of opinion and statutes. Checking the language is not necessary.

List of languages

1. Swedish _____
2. English _____
3. German _____
4. French _____
5. Russian _____
6. Norwegian ____
7. Danish _____
8. Spanish _____
9. Other,what? __

9. If the writing skill in the languages you need in your tasks today is inadequate, please mark in the list below the level on which it, in your opinion, should be. Please use the numbers of the rating scales above.

List of languages

1. Swedish _____
2. English _____
3. German _____
4. French _____
5. Russian _____
6. Norwegian ____
7. Danish _____
8. Spanish _____
9. Other,what? __

10. Estimate how often during the previous year you have needed foreign languages in your work in different language use situations. Mark the number describing the frequency of each situation for each language you need in your work.

The rating scales are as follows:
1 = a couple of times a year
2 = monthly
3 = weekly

Language use situations	Language						
	Swe	Eng	Ger	Fre	Rus	Other, what?	
1. Everyday situations (e.g. restaurant, hotel, travel)							
2. Social conversation (polite phrases, presentations, weather, family, hobbies)							
3. Discussions of daily events (current matters, conditions in Finland)							
4. Representing the work place (presentation of work, lunches, thank-you speeches and speeches at table)							
5. Visiting offices and institutes abroad.							
6. Preparation of meeting, negotiations and seminars.							
7. Participating in meetings, negotiations and seminars as listener.							
8. Active participation in meetings etc. (e.g. giving of a lecture, acting as chairman).							
9. Taking messages on the phone (e.g. inquiries and questions).							
10. Demanding phone discussions.							
11. Reading everyday texts.							
12. Reading brochures and manuals.							
13. Reading professional journals and literature.							
14. Reading of contracts							
15. Writing routine letters at work.							
16. Writing of more demanding letters at work.							

17. Compiling of official decisions, memoranda and reports.							
18. Translations from a foreign language into Finnish.							
19. What other situations?							

11. What concrete advantage have you had of your language proficiency ?

_____

12. Please estimate the adequacy of your language proficiency in taking care of the situations in which you have needed foreign languages in your work. Please write the number describing the adequacy of your language proficiency in language use situations for each language.
The rating scale is as follows:

4 = completely adequate
3 = almost adequate
2 = quite inadequate
1 = completely inadequate

Language use situations

	Language						
	Swe	Eng	Ger	Fre	Rus	Other, what?	
1. Everyday situations (e.g. restaurant, hotel, travel)							
2. Social conversation (polite phrases, presentations, weather, family, hobbies)							
3. Discussions of daily events (current matters, conditions in Finland)							
4. Representing the work place (presentation of work, lunches, thank-you speeches and speeches at table)							
5. Visiting offices and institutes abroad.							
6. Preparation of meeting, negotiations and seminars.							
7. Participating in meetings, negotiations and seminars as listener.							
8. Active participation in meetings etc. (e.g. giving of a							

lecture, acting as chairman).							
9. Taking messages on the phone (e.g. inquiries and questions).							
10. Demanding phone discussions.							
11. Reading everyday texts.							
12. Reading brochures and manuals.							
13. Reading professional journals and literature.							
14. Reading of contracts							
15. Writing routine letters at work.							
16. Writing of more demanding letters at work.							
17. Compiling of official decisions, memoranda and reports.							
18. Translations from a foreign language into Finnish.							
19. What other situations?							

13. Please mark in the table below those language use situations you would have had or you still would have if you just knew the language better than you do. Please use the numbers from the list of language use situations.

Language use situations

	Language						
	Swe	Eng	Ger	Fre	Rus	Other, what?	
1. Everyday situations (e.g. restaurant, hotel, travel)							
2. Social conversation (polite phrases, presentations, weather, family, hobbies)							
3. Discussions of daily events (current matters, conditions in Finland)							
4. Representing the work place (presentation of work, lunches, thank-you speeches and speeches at table)							
5. Visiting offices and institutes abroad.							
6. Preparation of meeting,							

negotiations and seminars.

7. Participating in meetings, negotiations and seminars as listener.
8. Active participation in meetings etc. (e.g. giving of a lecture, acting as chairman).
9. Taking messages on the phone (e.g. inquiries and questions).
10. Demanding phone discussions.
11. Reading everyday texts.
12. Reading brochures and manuals.
13. Reading professional journals and literature.
14. Reading of contracts
15. Writing routine letters at work.
16. Writing of more demanding letters at work.
17. Compiling of official decisions, memoranda and reports.
18. Translations from a foreign language into Finnish.
19. What other situations?

14. What concrete disadvantage have you possibly had because of your inadequate or lacking language proficiency?

15. What language/languages would you like to study in the first place? Please also mention in which language skills (oral communication, reading, writing) you primarily need training?

Information about the respondent:

Name _____

16. Department _____
17. Name of your position
    and a short description of your tasks _____
    _____
18. Education _____
    academic degree: _____
    other education: _____
19. Age ____
20. Mother tongue
    1. Finnish
    2. Swedish
21. Language training. Please mention all language training you have had. You may use even the reverse side of the paper:

Appendix 2

Questionnaire: Office personnel

Questions 1 and 2, cf. App. 1/1

3. What would you estimate your oral language proficiency to be? The rating scales are described from 1-6 below. Each level is described briefly. Proficiency at upper levels implies proficiency at lower levels. Please read the descriptions carefully and mark in the list below the number of the proficiency level which corresponds most closely to your language proficiency. Under the language lists there is space for personal remarks. Please make additions at the place REMARKS to your proficiency or delete what you don't know of the level in question. Don't forget to mention which language is involved.

Level no.	Level description
1	I cannot speak the language and I understand from speech only a few disconnected words.
2	I understand slow simple spoken language. I speak the language well enough that I am able to take a visitor to someone who speaks the language better.
3	I can manage somehow in everyday situations. I am able to guide visitors.
4	I can manage easily in common everyday situations (traveling, restaurant, hotel etc.). I can manage satisfactorily in social conversation (about weather, hobbies, Finland, events of the day). I can serve customers adequately. I can manage simple phone calls.
5	I am able to handle effortlessly in all oral language use situations connected with my duties at work, also in the phone.
6	I speak the language almost as a native speaker.

List of languages

1. Swedish _____
2. English _____
3. German _____
4. French _____
5. Russian _____
6. Norwegian ____
7. Danish _____
8. Spanish _____
9. Other,what? _____

REMARKS: _____

4. cf. App. 1/3 question 5

5. How well can you read a text in a foreign language+ The proficiency levels are described with the rating scales from 1-6. There is a short description for each level. Please write in the list below the number of the level which corresponds most closely to your language proficiency.

Level no.	Level description
1	I understand a few words of an easy text, but I am not able to make out, not even with the help of a dictionary, the meaning of the text.
2	I understand texts with contents concerning personal matters (e.g. letters) and questionnaires, time tables and other notices, written instructions.
3	With the help of a dictionary I am able to get some idea about a text in my field. I don't necessarily understand everything correctly.
4	The reading of professional literature does not cause any difficulties.
5	I am able to read texts in my field. I use the dictionary as help.
6	I read easily foreign language text.

List of languages

1. Swedish _____
2. English _____
3. German _____
4. French _____
5. Russian _____
6. Norwegian ____
7. Danish _____
8. Spanish _____
9. Other,what? _____

REMARKS: _____

6. cf. App. 1/4 question 7

7. Please estimate the level of your writing skill. The proficiency levels are described with the rating scales from 1-6. There is a short description for each level. Please write in the list below the number of the level which corresponds most closely to your writing skill.

Level no.	Level description

1 I can write out a text in the foreign language.

2 I am able to fill out simple questionnaires and write simple sentences with many mistakes.

3 I am able to write simple instructions and easy private letters. I make linguistic errors and even the orthography causes difficulties.

4 I am able to write, with the help of a dictionary, letters concerning work and other texts. I make a couple of mistakes.

5 I am able to write, with the help of a dictionary, a text in a foreign language, but I want to have the language checked by a native speaker.

6 I am able to produce a text in a foreign language. Checking the language is not necessary.

List of languages

1. Swedish _____
2. English _____
3. German _____
4. French _____
5. Russian _____
6. Norwegian ____
7. Danish _____
8. Spanish _____
9. Other,what? _____

REMARKS: _____

_____

8. cf. App. 1/5 question 9

9. In which situations and in which tasks do you most frequently need foreign languages in your work?

_____

_____

10. What are the situations in which you especially feel yourself insecure?

_____

_____

11. What language/languages would you like to study in the first place? Please mention also, in which language skills (oral communication, reading, writing) you primarily need training.

_____

_____

Information about the respondent:

Name _____

12 - 13. cf. App. 1/10 questions 16-17.
14. Education _____
15 - 17. cf. App. 1/10 questions 19 - 21.
18. Have you studied any languages during the last two years. Please circle the correct alternative and list the languages you have studied.
1. No
2. Yes, languages: _____

Appendix 3

The HEADS OF DEPARTMENTS

Questionnaire concerning the administrative employees

1. Please think of those languages which each of the persons listed below should know in his work. Please estimate what level of language proficiency he/she should have in order to perform the work duties satisfactorily. The rating scales are the same as in the previous questionnaire. Mark in the table below the level for each skill beside the language in question as follows:
   A = oral proficiency
   B = reading
   C = writing

   Please complete the list as needed.

ORAL PROFICIENCY (will be marked in column A)

In the language in question the person should orally:

The levels of language proficiency concerning the administrative personnel are repeated in the third person. Cf. App. 1.

READING (will be marked in column B)

WRITING (will be marked in column C)

Name of the employee	Language needed in the work																							
	Swedish			English			German			French			Russian			Other languages, what?								
	A	B	C	A	B	C	A	B	C	A	B	C	A	B	C	A	B	C	A	B	C	A	B	C
...																								

2. What is your general estimate of the language proficiency of the entire personnel of your department? How should their language skills be developed?

   _____

   _____

3. What is the most important foreign language of your department (Swedish included)?

   _____

4. How is the need for foreign languages going to develop in your department in the near future? Circle the correct alternative.
   5 The need will increase appreciably
   4 The need will increase somewhat
   3 There will be no change
   2 The need will decrease somewhat
   1 The need will decrease appreciably

5. Did any essential problem concerning the need for language skills remain outside the survey?

_____

_____

Appendix 4

Administrative personnel: Objective language training needs

The tables below show the objective oral language, reading and writing skill needs among administrative personnel in Swedish, English and German. The enclosed area on each table encompasses those individuals who need training in language proficiency (i.e., those individuals with self-assessed language proficiency on a lower level than required in the performance of their duties).

Oral Swedish

Oral Swedish skill of personnel	Oral language skill in Swedish required by work tasks				
	Poor	Fair	Satisfactory	Good	Very good
	Level 1	Level 2	Level 3	Level 4	Level 5
	N	N	N	N	N
No oral skill	-	-	1	-	-
Poor	-	3	5	5	-
Fair	1	-	11	5	-
Satisfactory	-	-	15	15	1
Good	-	-	4	10	1
Very good	-	-	-	3	4
Total	N = 84				

Training needed: 47 individuals
Qualitative training need: 1.5 levels (= average skill of the personnel is 1 - 2 rating scale levels lower than it should be)
Adequate skill: 29 individuals
Better than necessary skill: 8 individuals

Oral English

Oral English skill of personnel	Oral language skill in English required by work tasks				
	Poor	Fair	Satisfactory	Good	Very good
	Level 1	Level 2	Level 3	Level 4	Level 5
	N	N	N	N	N
No oral skill	-	-	2	-	-
Poor	1	4	10	1	-
Fair	-	2	18	2	-
Satisfactory	-	2	12	11	-
Good	-	-	5	6	1
Very good	-	-	-	3	2
Total	N = 82				

Training needed: 49 individuals
Qualitative training need: 1.3 levels
Adequate skill: 23 individuals
Better than necessary skill: 10 individuals

Oral German

Oral German skill of personnel	Oral language skill in German required by work tasks				
	Poor	Fair	Satisfactory	Good	Very good
	Level 1	Level 2	Level 3	Level 4	Level 5
	N	N	N	N	N
No oral skill	7	-	-	-	-
Poor	17	3	1	-	-
Fair	4	-	-	-	-
Satisfactory	2	-	3	-	-
Good	-	-	-	-	-
Very good	-	-	-	-	-
Total	N = 37				

Training needed: 11 individuals
Qualitative training need: 1.1 level
Adequate skill: 20 individuals
Better than necessary skill: 6 individuals

Swedish reading

Swedish reading skill of personnel	Swedish reading skill required by work tasks				
	Poor	Fair	Satisfactory	Good	Very good
	Level 1	Level 2	Level 3	Level 4	Level 5
	N	N	N	N	N
Poor	-	-	1	-	-
Fair	-	-	1	4	3
Satisfactory	-	1	5	12	5
Good	-	-	8	12	9
Very good	-	-	7	3	13
Total	N = 84				

Training needed: 35 individuals
Qualitative training need: 1.5 level
Adequate skill: 30 individuals
Better than necessary skill: 19 individuals

English reading

English reading skill of personnel	English reading skill required by work tasks				
	Poor	Fair	Satisfactory	Good	Very good
	Level 1 N	Level 2 N	Level 3 N	Level 4 N	Level 5 N
No reading skill	-	-	2	-	-
Poor	-	-	-	1	-
Fair	-	4	9	3	1
Satisfactory	-	3	15	6	4
Good	-	1	9	9	1
Very good	-	-	6	2	6
Total	N = 82				

Training needed: 27 individuals
Qualitative training need: 1.5 level
Adequate skill: 34 individuals
Better than necessary skill: 18 individuals

German reading

German reading skill of personnel	German reading skill required by work tasks				
	Poor	Fair	Satisfactory	Good	Very good
	Level 1 N	Level 2 N	Level 3 N	Level 4 N	Level 5 N
No reading skill	8	-	-	-	-
Poor	2	2	3	-	-
Fair	5	-	5	-	-
Satisfactory	4	3	2	-	-
Good	-	-	3	-	-
Very good	-	-	-	-	-
Total	N = 37				

Training needed: 18 individuals
Qualitative training need: 1.2 level
Adequate skill: 4 individuals
Better than necessary skill: 15 individuals

Swedish writing

Swedish writing skill of personnel	Swedish writing skill required by work tasks				
	Poor	Fair	Satisfactory	Good	Very good
	Level 1	Level 2	Level 3	Level 4	Level 5
	N	N	N	N	N
Poor	-	1	7	1	-
Fair	-	7	10	5	-
Satisfactory	-	2	21	7	1
Good	-	-	5	14	-
Very good	-	-	-	-	3
Total		N = 84			

Training needed: 32 individuals
Qualitative training need: 1.5 level
Adequate skill: 45 individuals
Better than necessary skill: 7 individuals

English writing

English writing skill of personnel	English writing skill required by work tasks				
	Poor	Fair	Satisfactory	Good	Very good
	Level 1	Level 2	Level 3	Level 4	Level 5
	N	N	N	N	N
No writing skill	-	-	3	-	-
Poor	2	6	6	1	-
Fair	2	11	15	-	-
Satisfactory	-	6	14	5	-
Good	-	-	4	4	1
Very good	-	-	-	-	2
Total		N = 82			

Training needed: 37 individuals
Qualitative training need: 1.4 level
Adequate skill: 33 individuals
Better than necessary skill: 12 individuals

German writing

German writing skill of personnel	German writing skill required by work tasks				
	Poor	Fair	Satisfactory	Good	Very good
	Level 1	Level 2	Level 3	Level 4	Level 5
	N	N	N	N	N
No writing skill	9	-	-	-	-
Poor	12	2	-	-	-
Fair	6	-	2	-	-
Satisfactory	2	1	1	-	-
Good	-	-	-	-	-
Very good	-	-	-	-	-
Total	N = 35				

Training needed: 13 individuals
Qualitative training need: 0.9 level
Adequate skill: 13 individuals
Better than necessary skill: 9 individuals

Appendix 5

Administrative personnel: Subjective language training needs in Swedish, English, German

(Language proficiency inadequacy, and needed level)

Oral language skill

Language	Needed level of oral language skill				
	Poor	Fair	Satis-factory	Good	Very good
	Level 1 N	Level 2 N	Level 3 N	Level 4 N	Level 5 N
Swedish	-	1	12	35	16
English	-	1	16	34	9
German	2	10	19	5	-

Reading skill

Language	Needed level of reading skill				
	Poor	Fair	Satis-factory	Good	Very good
	Level 1 N	Level 2 N	Level 3 N	Level 4 N	Level 5 N
Swedish	-	-	2	18	28
English	-	1	4	29	18
German	1	3	13	15	1

Writing skill

Language	Needed level of writing skill				
	Poor	Fair	Satis-factory	Good	Very good
	Level 1 N	Level 2 N	Level 3 N	Level 4 N	Level 5 N
Swedish	-	-	11	35	15
English	-	4	17	32	5
German	-	8	18	7	-
Total	N = 84 (Training need group)				

Appendix 6

Rating scales of language proficiency and language use situations developed for 2259 Helsinki city employees

I RATING SCALES

Oral proficiency

Level	Description of the performance
0	I cannot speak the language
1	I understand slow simple spoken language. I speak the language well enough that I am able to take a customer to someone who speaks the language better.
2	I can manage somehow in everyday working situations in customer service, nursing, etc. I am able to take guests from one place to another.
3	I am able to manage without any trouble in everyday working situations. I can manage simple phone calls. I am able to present my job somehow and take care of guests. I can also manage satisfactorily in a social conversation.
4	I am able to work in a foreign language in most oral language situations connected with my work, also on the phone. I make, however, mistakes and I don't feel comfortable in very demanding language use situations.
5	I am able to handle the language effortlessly in all language use situations connected with my duties at work.

Reading proficiency

Level	Description of the performance
0	I don't understand texts written in the foreign language in question.
1	I understand a few words of an easy text, but I am not able to make out the meaning of the text, not even with the help of a dictionary.
2	I can understand everyday texts (e.g. letters) and questionnaires, routine instructions and notices.
3	With the help of a dictionary I am able to get some idea about a text in my field. I don't necessarily understand everything correctly.
4	I have no difficulties in reading professional texts in my own field. With the help of a dictionary I am able to make something out of even a more difficult

text. I am able to make use of what I have read.

5 I read easily both more demanding general language and specific texts in my own field.

Writing proficiency

Level	Description of the performance
0	I am not able to write anything in the language in question.
1	I am able to copy a text in the foreign language if it is clearly written.
2	I can fill out ordinary forms and write simple sentences, but I make mistakes.
3	With the help of a dictionary I can write routine letters concerning my work, simple inquiries and memoranda. I make, however, occasional mistakes.
4	With the help of a dictionary I am able to write demanding letters, memoranda and lectures in my field etc. I need, however, to have the language checked by a native speaker.
5	I am able to produce texts in the foreign language in all language use situations connected with my work. Checking the language is not necessary.

II LANGUAGE USE SITUATIONS

Oral language use situations

1. Everyday situations in customer service and in caring for the ill and infirm.
2. Presentation of work place and work.
3. Taking care of guests.
4. Taking messages and answering inquiries on the telephone.
5. Initiating customer contacts and more demanding conversations on the telephone.
6. Acting as work counseler and trainer.
7. Preparation of meetings, exhibitions and visits.
8. Presentation of exhibitions.
9. Visiting exhibitions.
10. Visits to offices and institutes abroad.
11. Participating in meetings, seminars and congresses.
12. Business meetings.

Reading situations

13. Reading of routine texts (e.g. letters, notices)
14. Reading of instructions and brochures.

15. Reading of journals and professional literature in one's field.
16. Reading of demanding texts, e.g. contracts.

Writing situations

17. Writing of routine letters concerning work.
18. More demanding writing, e.g. obtaining and transmitting information.
19. Reporting the main content of a foreign language text in Finnish.

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